

PLUCK AND LUCK

SHORE LINE SAM
THE YOUNG SOUTHERN ENGINEER
AND OTHER STORIES

OR
RAILROADING
IN WAR TIMES
By Jas. C. Moffitt



Then there was an unearthly, a terrible explosion. The ground shook as with an earthquake, and the air was full of flying pieces of iron and debris. The locomotive had blown up!

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Shore Line Sam

THE YOUNG SOUTHERN ENGINEER

OR, RAILROADING IN WAR TIMES

By JAS. C. MERRITT

CHAPTER I.—A Narrow Escape.

"Sam!"

"What?"

"'Pon honor, I believe there's a man ahead in the middle of the track!"

The Clear Lake and Deep Pass express was thundering over a steep grade through the mountains of Georgia one starlit night in June, 1862. Bill Clemmens, the begrimed fireman, had occupied the window-seat a moment while Sam Wells, the young engineer, had been performing a few duties in the tender. Clemmens was a rough but whole-souled fellow, who might have run an engine himself years before, had he chosen to do so. But he had mated with Sam Wells, a young engineer from the North, and who was in fact a boy in years, yet so thorough a master of the lever that he had won for himself something more than local fame. On the Deep Pass and Clear Lake Railroad, known as the Shore Line, for the fact that for fifty years it ran along the shores of several large lakes, he was very popular and had gained the sobriquet of "Shore Line Sam." He was perhaps better known by this than by his own name. Upon the night in question the express was topping a grade of twenty miles from Clear Lake, the terminus. Bill Clemmens, sitting in the cab-window, had suddenly caught sight of a dark object far ahead between the rails. His declaration brought Shore Line Sam instantly to the throttle.

"Do you mean it, Bill?"

"I do."

In went the throttle, and "down brakes" was peeled forth upon the night air. The train came to a sudden, jerking stop. The cow-catcher of the locomotive was not ten yards from the would-be victim, who, now it was seen, had been tied to the rails and was helpless. Every car-window went up, and excited passengers piled out, eager to learn the meaning of the stop. In the rear car was a guard of Confederate soldiers on their way to camp at Clear Lake. They also came out. The conductor rushed along to the engine and cried:

"What is the matter, Sam?"

"Matter enough!" exclaimed the young engineer laconically. "Look ahead between the rails."

"Great heavens!" exclaimed the conductor. "A man tied to the rails!"

Willing hands cut the unfortunate's bonds and he staggered to his feet. He was revealed in the light of the lanterns as a tall, fine-looking man and dressed in the full uniform of a Union officer. His position was now one of scarcely less danger. Every person on board the train was a Southerner, and the guard of Confederate soldiers were hastening up.

"Waal!" exclaimed Bill Clemmens, after having cut the bonds of the officer, "I reckon ye had a narrow pull that time. Who are ye?"

The Union officer drew himself up, saw his position, and that the Confederate soldiers had already surrounded him.

"I am an officer in the Union army. I am major by rank, and my name is James Vincent."

"A blasted Yankee!" cried one of the crowd.

"Better hev let the cars run over him, I reckon!"

"Hold yer mouth-traps a while!" cried Bill Clemmens to the excited crowd. "Let the man tell his story. How did ye come in that box, major?"

Major Vincent gazed scornfully about him, and replied to Clemmens:

"I was crossing the country to rejoin Gen. Sherman's staff at Atlanta. I was set upon by guerrillas, some of Mosby's gang, I believe, beaten into insensibility, robbed and tied to the rails."

"That's a condemned shame!" cried the big fireman. "If they war men they wud never hev done thet."

But the Confederate soldiers now closed in. The officer in command was a tall, slender, dark-featured young fellow. His manner was savage and imperious as he said:

"Major Vincent, United States Army, consider yourself our prisoner."

"I yield as a prisoner of war, and demand the courteous treatment by right accorded an officer of my rank."

A sneering smile played about the lips of Lieut. Reginald Vane, which was the young officer's name. He whipped his sword from his sheath.

"We will give you the treatment which every dog of a Yankee spy deserves!" he cried:

"What is that?" asked the Union officer, calmly. "An ounce of cold lead at fifty paces!" retorted the young Southern lieutenant. "Corporal, do your duty!"

Major Vincent took a step forward.

"What? You do not mean to shoot me!"

"What better fate do you deserve?"

"But that is not according to the rules of war. An officer of my rank——"

"Confound your rank!" retorted the young lieutenant, savagely. "You're a condemned Yankee dog, and all you deserve is death. Corporal, halt your men. About face! Ready arms!"

The crowd fell back. Major Vincent stood alone. The muzzles of a dozen rifles covered him.

"Lieutenant!" cried Vincent, vigorously. "I protest against this barbarous treatment. My rank entitles me to better treatment——"

"That is right!" cried a firm, manly voice, "and I for one will not see him shot. Reginald Vane, do not forget principle and honor so far as to commit wilful murder!"

Sam Wells, the handsome young engineer, it was who spoke thus, and he stepped boldly in front of Vincent. In an instant Bill Clemmens was by his side.

"I allus goes with my mate!" he cried, bluffly. "It ain't right to shoot this man!"

A cheer of approval went up from the crowd. Badly as the Southerners hated the blue uniform, they were too deeply wedded to honor and chivalry to sanction so brutal a deed.

"Sam Wells!" hissed Vane, "get out of the way or I'll order you shot, too!"

"You may do that, Reginald Vane!" cried Sam, "but I don't believe there's a man in your squad will dare to put a bullet through Sam Wells' body."

A wild cheer went up from the crowd.

"Good for you, Sam?"

"Hang to it!"

"Sam Wells!" gritted Vane, "you are a confounded Yankee yourself, and in sympathy with the North. Get out of the way or I'll order you shot, too!"

"You dare not!"

"You are obstructing the Confederacy. That establishes you its enemy, and a traitor. Attention company! Ready! Aim! Fire!"

Every musket was aimed at Sam Wells and Major Vincent. The latter tried to push Sam away.

"Good heavens! do not sacrifice yourself!" cried the brave Union officer. "Let them shoot me. Save yourself!"

"Fear not!" cried Sam; "they will not fire upon me!"

Again Vane thundered the order. But not one of the muskets spoke. The rebel lieutenant was dumfounded. The corporal stepped forward and touched his cap respectfully.

"We will obey all reasonable orders, sir; but we can't shoot Sam Wells!"

But now a keen-eyed, shrewd-looking man with a cape overcoat over his shoulders stepped forward. His air was that of quiet authority.

"What is all this fuss about?" he asked; "why do you shoot this man?"

"Because he is an accursed Yankee spy!" cried Vane.

"Major Vincent, I believe," said the short man, addressing the prisoner. "Very glad to meet you,

major, and rest assured you shall receive all the courtesy due your rank."

"Who are you?" roared Vane, turning upon the speaker.

"I am Col. Ben Crossley, of the staff of Gen. Hill," he said, quietly. "One more insulting word from you, sir, and I'll have you court-martialed for insubordination." Then turning to the Union officer: "You are our prisoner, major. But come into the smoking-car with me."

Vane slunk away, completely awed by his superior. The conductor shouted all aboard, and the passengers clambered into the cars. But Vincent had time to say to Sam Wells in an undertone:

"You have saved my life. I will never forget it."

CHAPTER II.—Bill Hurd's Warning.

There had never been good feeling between Reginald Vane and Shore Line Sam for many reasons. The planter's son had looked down with contempt upon the young engineer as much below him in social standing, simply because he was an engineer. But Sam was such a thorough gentleman and scholar that, with his many rare accomplishments, he found even an easier entree into society than did Vane. Eunice North, the fair daughter of the president of the Clear Lake Railroad, deigned to look with much favor upon the young engineer, despite his occupation.

"I am sure he is no less a man for being an engineer," she declared, in reply to an aspersion from Vane upon Sam's rank. "He certainly is vastly superior to a fop."

"I don't admire your taste," Vane sneered.

"Indeed, I do not seek your admiration," she responded, crushingly.

Eunice was, as was natural, wholly in sympathy with the South. Sam shared the cause of the North, and there were many friendly passages-at-arms between them on that score.

"Indeed!" she said, archly, one time, "if you are such a firm Yankee, Sam, why is it that you do not enlist in the Union cause?"

"Because I abhor war, and I regard this strife as all a mistake. It is a wicked fight of brother against brother."

"Yet you are in sympathy with them."

"Miss Eunice," said Sam, firmly, "I am an engineer in the employ of this railroad. There is no man in the world who should be more steadfast to duty than an engineer, though it be against his interests, his life, his all. I should carry that train through or die."

"Father, there is no man in the world you may place greater trust in than Sam Wells," Eunice declared to her father that night. "He is a Northerner by all instincts, and yet he would not betray us!"

"I believe you, my daughter," declared Mandeville North, the railroad magnate. "Sam Wells is a young man of rare integrity and great honor."

Obstructions were frequently placed upon the tracks, bullets fired through windows of cars, and other lawless acts were in hourly perpetration.

One day the good citizens of the town awoke to find that a mile of track leading out of the town had been ripped up, and a placard posted up near the depot with the following notification:

"TO THE RAILROAD COMPANY."

"We don't want any more trains run over this road, carrying Yankee spies into our lines. The first man who tries to drive another engine over the Shore Line will die.

"By Order of Bill Hurd,
"Mosby's Right-Bower."

That day the engineers came in a body to Mr. North's office and tendered their resignations.

"It ain't any use to try to run any more trains, Mr. North, until after the war," they declared.

"Well, perhaps not," said the railroad magnate. "But I don't believe a gang of guerrillas will stop me. I shall issue orders for the continuance of trains as soon as the track is relaid, and you must all stand ready to obey."

Nothing more was said. It might be said right here that Shore Line Sam was not one of this chicken-hearted crowd of engineers. When they called upon him to join them, he said:

"I can't do it."

"Why not?" asked the spokesman of the party, in surprise.

"Because this is too critical a time to desert Mr. North. If there ever was a time that we as engineers should stand by him it is now."

Guerrilla warfare has ever been a disgrace to any nation which has lent support or encouragement to it. Its history is one of the darkest pages in the chronicles of our Civil War.

Bill Hurd had shown his hand. He meant to crush Mr. North's railroad by affecting that it was the means of bringing Union spies into the Confederate lines. Mr. North's position now became a most trying and precarious one.

Owing to the strike of the engineers, and his avowed opinion of Sam Wells, who was known to be a Yankee, exaggerated reports were spread about the country, many of them to the effect that the magnate was secretly lending aid to the opposite cause. This, if established, would have made him out a traitor. Mr. North, who was a loyal Southerner, indignantly repudiated these charges when brought to his ears.

"I am a Southern man," he declared, "and loyal to the cause of Jefferson Davis. I transport our troops over my railroad free of charge. I have contributed money to the Confederacy, and I am entitled to its protection. I demand it now to enable me to operate my railroad against the opposition of a parcel of lawless, irresponsible guerrillas."

True to his word, Mr. North went to Col. Crossley, and presented his grievances. The colonel listened attentively.

"Mr. North," he said, earnestly, "you are right, and Bill Hurd has no right to obstruct you. But I have no more control over the guerrillas than the winds of heaven. At present I am in a very cramped position. General Hill holds me ready for a moment's call. However, I will do this: You shall have a guard of five hundred men for three days. In that time you can relay your tracks, and after that fight it out with Hurd the best you can."

"Very well," said Mr. North, resolutely. "If it takes every cent I have in the world I will run my railroad in spite of Bill Hurd!"

The magnate meant what he said. A few hours later a gang of men were ready relaying the rails.

A guard of five hundred Confederate soldiers

protected them, and not a guerrilla put in an appearance. But at the expiration of three days Col. Crossley withdrew his man.

Mr. North posted a notice:

"TO THE ENGINEERS OF THE

D. P. & C. L. R. R.

"Trains will resume the regular schedule upon Wednesday, the 18th. It is expected that every engineer will be on hand. Those who fail to report on time will be discharged from my employ. Mandeville North, President."

A great crowd collected at the station to see the first train go out. Not a passenger dared to get aboard. It was the morning express, but the regular engineer did not appear at the round-house to assume charge. Indeed, of the whole force only two appeared—Sam Wells and Bill Clemmens, his mate. So great was the fear of Hurd's gang, that the engineers really did not dare to risk making the run. Mr. North was pale but resolute.

"It don't look as if I was going to have very much support," he said. "What do you think of it, Sam?"

"I think they are all a set of poltroons and cowards!" declared the young engineer, with flashing eyes. Mr. North turned about.

"Sam Wells," he said, earnestly, "I don't want to ask you to do this thing if you have the least bit of compunction. Will you take that express down the line?"

"Mr. North, I am obedient to your orders. If you say take that train out to-day, I will carry it to the end of the line, or die in the attempt."

A few moments later Shore Line Sam, with Bill Clemmens, was aboard Old Ninety, one of the best engines on the line, and ready for the ordeal.

CHAPTER III.—A Fight with the Guerrillas.

But as Shore Line Sam, the only loyal engineer on the line, appeared, the applause was deafening. The express drew up at the depot platform, and Sam stood in the cab entrance awaiting orders. But the cars remained empty. Not a passenger dared to board the train. In the cab, Sam and Bill had made an effort to provide themselves with the means of defense. They had four good Remington rifles with plenty of ammunition, and the tender was so arranged that they could seek shelter in it and make of it a sort of fortress. Mr. North had appealed to the civil authorities and obtained fifty armed officers, who took up their positions in the forward baggage and mail-car. This was punched with loopholes so that they could fire with security upon the foe. Mr. North approached Sam in the cab, and said with a voice quivering somewhat with emotion:

"Sam Wells, I admire your courage. You are true grit. I pray for your safe return."

"I will bring the train back safely, sir," said Sam, resolutely, "or come back a corpse."

The starting-gong rang, and Sam stepped to the throttle.

"We're off, Bill!" he said.

"Right ye are!" agreed the bluff fireman.

Both men drew a deep breath and exchanged glances. Sam extended his hand to Bill and they

shook hands warmly. The locomotive struck clear of the switches now, and Sam opened the throttle wide. It needed but a glance to determine the fact that the boy engineer was a real connoisseur in his profession. Out over the long grades the locomotive flew like a thing of life. Old Ninety was one of the best engines on the line. Now, for two miles Sam could see a clear stretch. The iron rails stretched away straight as an arrow. Those two miles were covered in less than two minutes, and now a long, heavy grade was struck. But the locomotive had gained such momentum that it easily topped it, and now the mighty walls of Deep Pass were seen not twenty miles away. Thus far not an obstacle had been encountered, or a sign observed of the guerrillas. A thought struck Sam. It was not improbable that the villains had failed to learn of the proposed run, and that they would not attempt to interfere with it. In that case it might be safely made. But almost as the thought struck him, a wild cry pealed from Bill Clemmens' lips:

"Look out, Sam! There's a rail up dead ahead!"

Sam saw that his mate had spoken the truth. Just ahead he saw that one of the rails had been displaced. Also in the whirl of that moment he observed a legion of rough-clad guerrillas swarming along a height by the side of the track. The guerrillas were there in force, and they certainly meant to wreck the train. There was no doubt of this. The sensations experienced by Sam Wells were most intense. It was not lack of pluck which caused him to close the throttle at that moment. He knew that he was responsible for the lives of the men in the car behind him, and he must not needlessly sacrifice them. Down went the locomotive brakes, and the train came to a jarring dead stop. But it was just in time.

Not a dozen yards intervened to the gap in the rails. Then the contest began. The vells of the guerrillas were frightful, and they made a dash for the train. It was now the opportunity for the armed men in the car. Bullets flew thick as hail. The defenders of the mail-car poured a volley into the ranks of the guerrillas. It staggered them. But they came swarming about the engine like bees. They tried to board it, but Sam moved it backward and forward by opening and closing the throttle, so that they were in many cases thrown under the wheels, and found it not easy to get a hold. While Bill Clemmens, with his huge iron-poker, swung over the edge of the tender and swept them off like so many flies. In doing this the brave fireman received three flesh wounds, none of them, however, proving serious. Meanwhile, the guards in the car were getting in noble work. It seemed that the guerrillas were not in full force anyway, and the reception they met with proved too hot for them. They were actually compelled to fall back. Wild cheers burst from the defenders of the train. A rally even was made, and the guerrillas were driven ingloriously back into the woods. It was a complete triumph. Shore Line Sam was not the least delighted of all. Bill Clemmens was wild.

"I reckon we give 'em a right smart whipping that time!" he cried. "We'll run this railroad in spite of 'em!"

Willing hands now set at work to lay the displaced rail. The train passed safely over, and once more went on its way.

"Hurrah for our side!" cried Bill Clemmens, as

he caught up the shovel to replenish the furnace. "We are the victors, you bet!"

"Yes, but only for a minute, consarn ye!" gritted a loud voice, and from the shadow back of the water-tank in the tender two men leaped forth.

Down over the coal they came, and a pistol in the hands of one of them flashed. Bill Clemmens threw up his arms and fell in a heap. Shore Line Sam for one swift instant was thrilled with horror. He had not a weapon in his hand. Like a young tiger, he sprang upon the two guerrillas. The struggle was a swift and terrible one. Twice Sam went down, but each time he was up, and hurled one of his assailants literally off the locomotive to go to a terrible death by the track. The other, terrified by the young engineer's fury, made an effort to retreat into the tender, but changing his mind, sprang through the little door in the cab, along the bridge and down upon the pilot of the engine. One moment Sam gazed with awful anguish and horror at Bill Clemmens' blood-stained form. Then, with a fury he cried:

"They killed you, Bill, but I'll avenge your death or die in the attempt!"

Through the cab-window and along the bridge he sprang. Upon the engine's pilot crouched the guerrilla. His eyes were dilated with terror, and his teeth chattering like castanets. It was an awful moment, but Sam Wells thought only of revenge, and clinched with the foe right there upon that precarious footing, with the locomotive running wild. An awful struggle over the locomotive's cowcatcher followed.

CHAPTER IV.—How Sam Made Love.

Terrible was that struggle. Backward and forward they swayed, and it seemed every instant as if one or both would go down beneath the iron wheels. But the struggle could not last forever, and a happy incident terminated it in Sam's favor. His foe stumbled, failed to recover himself, and went down. Sam was on top and held his man as in a vise.

"Surrender!" cried the young engineer. "If you don't I shall throw you to your death."

"All right, captain," replied the terrified guerrilla. "I'm yer prisoner."

Sam happened to have some cord in his pocket, and with it he bound the fellow's wrists. No sooner had he accomplished this than he looked up with horror and saw that the train was making for a short curve. At the present rate of speed the locomotive could not possibly keep the rail. Shore Line Sam believed that death was upon him. He drew a deep breath, arose to his feet, and clutched at the headlight rail. But at that instant there came a sudden jerking, jarring motion, speed was slackened, and Sam knew that the brakes had been applied. At the same moment the locomotive's whistle pealed out. Astounded, the young engineer looked back at the cab-window and to his delight and amazement saw Bill Clemmens' face there. The brave fireman's wound had not proven mortal, nor even more than a slight one, the bullet striking his skull, and, glancing off, deprived him of his senses for a short time. In a moment Sam had reached the cab, forcing his prisoner to precede him.

"Bill, old pard!" he cried, with great joy, "you are alive, and—thank heaven! you are not badly wounded even!"

"No, Sam, I'm as chipper as ever," replied the bluff fireman. "Only I'm a bit ashamed of myself for fainting away in such a foolish manner. But heavens, mate, ye must have had a risky fight out there?"

"I did," said Sam, "but I secured my man!"

"I see you did, and it was a plucky capture. I congratulate you."

Sam now returned to the throttle, and held the train down to a rapid speed of about fifty miles per hour. This was on account of the many curves which the road held. But an hour later they emerged into the open country again, and Sam pulled the whistle for Deep Pass. They had not made a stop at any of the numerous way stations. As the train rolled into the depot at Deep Pass, a great crowd was gathered upon the platform. But as it rolled into the depot, the shot-riddled cars and the broken windows showed that the run had not been free from difficulties. The party received a genuine ovation, and were heroes in the eyes of all. Of course news of the success of the party had been telegraphed to Mr. North at Clear Lake. A reply came a half-hour later for Sam. Thus it was worded:

"Bravo! You have covered yourself with glory. I think you need fear nothing on your return, for I have heard that Hurd has been drawn into an engagement with a detachment of Union cavalry, which will keep him busy for a time. Please post a notice to this effect for the benefit of passengers."

"Mandeville North, President."

Sam followed these directions, and when starting time came, the train was crowded with passengers. The run back to Clear Lake was made without accident, as Mr. North had predicted. Not a guerrilla was seen, and as the train slowed up at the spot where the affray had taken place, men went forward and securely spiked the loose rail. But far off in the distance firing could be heard. No doubt it was the guerrillas in their engagement with the Union cavalry. The rail was more securely spiked, and then the train went on to Clear Lake. The first person to greet Sam as he alighted from his engine was Mr. North. The magnate was in the happiest frame of mind imaginable.

"Come into my office, Sam," he said, "I want to talk with you."

The young engineer followed the magnate into his private office.

"Now tell me all about it, Sam," said Mr. North as they were seated.

Sam complied, and modestly told the thrilling story of the fight with the guerrillas. Mr. North listened with deep interest.

"Well, Sam," he said, when the young engineer had finished, "you have made a hero of yourself. But yet it is a terrible risk to go through such a gauntlet. Yet I am determined that at least one train a day must be run over this road if I have to run it myself."

"Sir," said Sam, forcibly, "you will not have to do that. I will stick to my post to the end."

"You shall be well repaid, Sam," cried the magnate.

Then he ceased speaking. The office door opened, and a young girl, fair as a dream, entered. She paused at sight of Sam, and her beautiful face flushed a trifle.

"Pardon me," she stammered. "I thought you were alone, papa."

"That is all right, my daughter. Come right in. It is only Sam Wells," cried the magnate.

The young girl's face lit up, and she instantly entered.

"Oh, why, so it is!" she cried, with an arch glance which made Sam's heart beat like a trip-hammer. "I am glad to see you, Sam. I heard all about your brave work this afternoon."

"I merely tried to do my duty, Miss Eunice," said the young engineer, modestly.

"Sam has done me the greatest service possible," cried Mr. North. "My daughter, we owe much to our plucky boy engineer."

"Indeed we do," said Eunice, sincerely.

Sam felt giddy with delight. He turned very red in the face, and tried to stammer out something, got mixed up, and at that moment fate conspired to relieve his embarrassment, for the office-bell rang.

"That is for me," exclaimed Mr. North hurriedly. "I will be back soon."

And out of the office he went. Sam and Eunice were alone.

"Indeed, Sam Wells," said the magnate's daughter, frankly, "I am proud of your acquaintance. Your brave deed is the talk of the country."

"I am entitled to no more praise than any of the rest," protested Sam. "There is Bill Clemmens—"

"Ah, but the others would not have gone but for you."

"I am not so sure of that."

"You cannot evade it, Sam. But to change the subject, are you going to attend the military ball?"

"I—I—that is," stammered Sam, "I would be delighted if I were sure of a partner. I presume at this late day all the young ladies have become engaged."

"Indeed, I have not."

Their eyes met. Sam's heart was ready to leap from his bosom at the merry challenge in Eunice North's eyes. In a moment, wholly unconscious in his ardor of what he was doing, he was by her side, and had taken her hand.

"Eunice—Miss North," he said, "pardon my abruptness, but may I sue for the mighty honor of your hand at the ball?"

"You may, Sam. There is nobody whom I would rather go with."

She spoke honestly, seriously, and Sam became strangely calm and resolute. He seated himself beside her and took her hand in his.

"Eunice," he said, boldly, "I have the assurance to hope that you like me?"

The roguish twinkle in her eyes was but contradictory to the happy smile upon her lips.

"Like you? Why, of course I do, Sam. What an absurd question."

"Yes—but—but—"

Sam was rattled again.

"What were you going to say, Sam Wells?"

Sam braced up.

"You must think I am an idiot. Well, I am one—that is—Eunice, I like you!"

"Oh, indeed. I am glad to know it."

Sam drew a deep breath.

"I will—I must say more, even though you hate me for it. Eunice, with all my soul I love you. Listen: I beg you forgive me, but I must speak my heart, and then cast me off with scorn if you will. I am but a poor engineer, I know, but if you will give me one ray of hope——"

Eunice North arose and walked deliberately across the room. She turned upon him. The expression of her face was such as Sam never forgot to his dying day.

"Stop! Never draw a line of distinction between us again, Sam Wells. I am the proudest woman on earth to-day to know that I am enshrined in your heart. Oh, foolish, blind fellow! Can you not see that—that——"

"What?" cried Sam, half in a frenzy.

"That I love you."

The next moment she was clasped in the strong arms of the handsome young engineer. He would have poured out his whole soul to her then and there but for a startling incident. The door opened, and a man stood upon the threshold. It was Reginald Vane!

CHAPTER V.—A Dastardly Game.

Vane's entrance had been so sudden and unceremonious that he actually saw Eunice in Sam's arms. His face became contorted with evil passion, and he took a stride into the room.

"Zounds!" he hissed. "What does this mean?" Sam recovered himself quickly.

"It means that you are an intruder," he said, coldly. "What is your business?"

"An intruder!" gasped the young lieutenant. "I should say that I had arrived just in time to protect Miss North from your insults. Why, you scoundrel, I actually saw you have your arm about her waist!"

"Well, I have the right," replied Sam.

"Miss North, accept my protection," said Vane, pompously. "I will make this low-born cur atone for the insults to you!"

But Eunice turned a cold gaze upon the self-appointed champion.

"Mr. Wells has not insulted me," she said, keenly. "It is you who owe an apology for coming in upon us so unceremoniously."

"What?" gasped Vane, somewhat staggered. "Do you mean to say that you permitted him to take those liberties with you?"

"I have; and for the good reason that we are engaged to be married at some future day."

The villain glared at Sam with deadly hatred. He trembled aspen-like with suppressed madness, but Eunice's manner cowed him. He bowed stiffly and said:

"Eunice, you will live to regret this step. Sam Wells, the game is not yet won. Look out!"

The door closed behind him. Eunice sank into a chair quite overcome. But both suddenly braced up and appeared natural, for Mr. North returned at this moment. Eunice conferred with her father a few moments, and then started to leave. Sam escorted her to her carriage. At the step he whispered:

"I will be on hand to-night, and I shall be the happiest man at the ball."

All the rest of that day Sam was wholly unfit for duty. He was really like a man in a trance.

When night came, however, attired in a rich dress-suit, he presented himself at the North mansion with a carriage and took Miss Eunice to the ball. As they appeared upon the floor at the grand military ball that night, they were the cynosure of all eyes, and a prettier couple had never been seen in Clear Lake as everybody averred. The news of the engagement had begun to be whispered about.

"It is a pretty match," all said, and there seemed none but kindly feelings toward the young couple.

When Sam had entered the hall he had, in custom with the other gentlemen, left his wraps and coat in the check-room. Vane had been present at the time. Of course the young engineer had attached no significance to this fact, and, indeed, had no thought of anything wrong. At an unobserved moment, however, Vane contrived, on the excuse of looking after his own coat, to enter the check-room. He went instead to Sam's coat and thrust a bunch of letters into the pocket. Then he returned to the ball-room. Vane believed that he had been unobserved in this act. There was a light of evil exultation in his eyes as he stepped upon the floor. He waltzed with several of the young ladies, and then retired to one end of the ball-room. Sam, with Eunice, stood near, and they were conversing with some friends. The young engineer had not the slightest suspicion of the veritable bombshell all ready to burst over his head. At this moment a man in Confederate uniform appeared in the doorway. Vane made a signal to him. He disappeared, and a few moments later the entire party of dancers were astonished to hear the roll of a drum at the door, the clank of arms and the tramp of feet. Then into the hall there filed a squad of soldiers. Reginald Vane stepped forward, and the captain, with drawn sword, saluted him.

"Lieutenant, I await orders. Will you point out the spy?"

"Yes," cried Vane, in a vengeful voice, "there he is!"

The villain pointed one finger directly at Sam Wells.

"Sam Wells, you are under arrest upon the warrant of Lieut. Vane!" said the Confederate officer.

Sam for a moment stood like a statue. Then the color mounted to his temples.

"Arrest!" he exclaimed, in a clear, full voice.

"By whose orders?"

"Lieut. Vane's."

"What is the charge?"

"Evidence is on hand to show that you are a traitor to the Confederacy and playing the part of a Yankee spy."

A little scream escaped Eunice's lips, but Sam turned and faced Vane.

"You scoundrel!" he exclaimed, tensely. "You know that is false. What is your game?"

"The game is that you are found out at last, Sam Wells!" hissed Vane.

"You dare to make that charge against me?"

"I do."

Sam smiled contemptuously.

"You may have military authority," he said, "but you cannot pervert it to the extent of having me shot for a spy, without the necessary evidence."

"The evidence exists."

"Where?"

"Upon your person."

Sam was astounded. Vane turned to the soldiers and said:

"Search him!"

At once several of them laid hands upon him. Sam made no resistance, and they searched him. But nothing in the shape of evidence was found. Vane, however, said:

"Perhaps he has the letters in his overcoat. Go downstairs and get it!"

The overcoat was brought up. A quick search revealed a packet of letters. The captain of the squad examined them.

"The prisoner is convicted!" he said. "Here are letters from General Sherman, by special courier, addressed to Sam Wells, thanking him for plans of our works at Clear Lake and other valuable matters."

Sam Wells could hardly believe his senses.

"What is that?" he exclaimed hotly; "that is a lie! I never received such letters. They are forgeries!"

"That won't work, Sam Wells, Yankee spy," hissed Vane. "You are convicted. Captain, he deserves no trial. He is a spy, and must die. Take him out and shoot him at twenty paces!"

Two soldiers sprang forward and attempted to seize Sam. But he hurled one aside and wrested the bayoneted musket from the other. Then he cried:

"Hold! I warn you not to lay hands on me on peril of your lives. I am innocent, and I will die in defense of my honor. It is a black falsehood which Reginald Vane utters when he says I am a spy. I never saw these letters before in my life. They are forgeries. I don't know how they came in my pocket, but they are forgeries."

Once more the guard started forward to lay hands upon Sam, but Eunice North, with the air of a queen, faced them.

"Hold!" she cried dramatically. "I say you shall not take an innocent man out and shoot him. Reginald Vane, villain, I will tell you that there are men of chivalry and men of heart in this hall who will lend me their aid to baffle your fiendish plot!"

Reginald Vane shrunk back, awed by her forceful words. There was a momentary hush like death. Then once again Eunice North cried:

"If there are men of courage and honor in this hall tonight, I call upon them to come to the defense of a Southern woman against a brute and a ruffian!"

In an instant a score of the young men sprang forward. The impulsive Southern temperament was aroused, and they faced the soldiers. Vane was dumfounded. He had not anticipated this state of affairs. But his swollen, temper-distorted visage was immovable.

"Captain, do your duty!" he said. "I make no war upon a woman. But that spy must be punished!"

"Give him a trial," cried a chorus of voices.

"That is the least that can be done."

"But that is a waste of time," cried Vane obstinately. "He stands convicted."

"No!" cried a sharp, stern voice. "That is a lie!"

A man of medium height, and with open, honest features, stepped forward. He was known as Robert Haynes, a merchant of the town.

"What!" exclaimed Vane. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that Sam Wells is an innocent man."

"Have you proof?"

"I have. I can give evidence that he is the victim of a villainous plot."

Haynes gazed keenly at the villain.

"I stood in the coat-room," he said, "and I saw you place that packet of letters in Sam's pocket. I did not understand your purpose, then, but I do now. It was the trick of a sneak and an assassin!"

The tableau was one worthy of an artist. Vane stood like a livid statue, without power to speak for some moments.

"I have plenty of proof to back up my assertion," continued Haynes. "Two other well-known gentlemen stood there with me and saw the act. It was a deliberate, murderous scheme upon your part to rid this community of Sam Wells, one of our most valuable citizens. You dare not deny it!"

CHAPTER VI.—Thrilling Incidents.

It was true that Reginald Vane did not dare to make denial. He was entrapped, and his position in the eyes of everybody present at that moment was not an enviable one. Vane turned without a word and stalked out of the ball-room. He was beaten, crushed, and all the hatred of his soul was intensified a million-fold. Nobody sought to restrain him, and the air seemed purer in the place after he had gone. The soldiers followed. But dancing was thought of no more that night. The affair was excitedly discussed until the party broke up. Sam came in for many congratulations for his narrow escape and complete vindication. The young engineer despite the fact that he was practically an alien in the place, was tenfold more popular than ever. Eunice North was happy indeed at the escape of her young lover, and as they rode home that night in the carriage, she murmured as she was pressed to Sam's breast:

"Oh, I have a dreadful fear, Sam! I am afraid that Reginald Vane still means you great harm."

"I shall be upon my guard, darling. I don't believe his charges against me would ever be believed."

Sam went to his lodgings that night a very happy youth. The next morning he went down to the round-house at an early hour. Bill Clemmens was there, and had Old Ninety wiped and oiled, and a good fire in her furnace.

"I reckoned I'd better be all ready, Sam," he declared. "There's likely to be lively work ahead for us."

"You may be right, Bill," said Sam; "the guerrillas won't give up, if Bill Hurd sticks to old traditions."

"Oh, the guerrillas ain't all that's goin' to give us trouble, my lad."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sam. "What do you mean?"

"Haven't ye heerd the news?"

"What news?"

"Why, about the fight?"

"No."

"Lord love us, that's queer. But I recollect ye were out to a ball last night. Well, there's the dickens to pay down at Black Gap."

"What's the matter?"

"Big fight. Ye see, about six thousand of our men under Col. Ben Crossley run into a big party of Yanks. They've been fighting for twelve hours, an' they do say that it is a toss up which side wins."

Sam was astonished.

"A battle at Black Gap!" he exclaimed. So near?"

"Pooty nigh, I reckon. Waal, I thought meb-be they might call on our boys here to come down an' reinforce 'em."

"Of course," said Sam; "they will very likely do that."

But before they could make any further talk a messenger entered the round-house. He handed a note to Sam. The young engineer read it as follows:

"Dear Sam: Come to my office as quick as you can. Important business. Yours hastily,

"MANDEVILLE NORTH."

Sam at once started for the office. A few moments later he reached it and at once entered. Mr. North sat at a table writing. He sprang up as Sam entered. At the same moment a man in the full uniform of an orderly came in by another door.

"Ah, Vandyke!" said Mr. North brusquely, "here is our engineer, and you can give him directions. I have no doubt he will take your train through all safely."

Sam shook hands with the orderly.

"You see, my friend," said Vandyke, "I have been sent here by Colonel Crossley to fetch reinforcements. But I have no way to get them there save by this railroad. No other engineer can be found. You must go!"

"I am under orders," Sam said tersely.

"Then you will take the train out by Orderly Vandyke's direction," said Mr. North.

"How many cars?"

"At least eight."

"Very well, sir."

Sam turned to the orderly.

"I will be at the platform in six minutes. Will you be ready?"

"My men are in line on the public square now," was the reply.

Sam left the office and started for the round-house. Bill Clemmens saw him coming and began to get up steam. As Sam had promised, in six minutes the train was at the depot platform. The Confederate regiment got aboard in quick time, and Sam opened the throttle and let the engine out to her best. Vandyke was in the cab with Sam and Bill Clemmens. As they neared Black Gap, after an hour's run, the distant sound of firing was heard. At this moment, rounding a curve, a startling sight was beheld. Directly upon the track, and between the rails, was a twelve-pounder field-cannon facing the locomotive, and a Union artilleryman was just in the act of pulling the lanyard. Sam saw in a flash of time that it was a planned reception for the relief train, and that it was the intention of the artilleryman to send a solid shot directly through the train. The cannon was not one hundred and fifty yards distant, and there seemed no earthly way to dodge the cannon-ball, nor was there such. Of course Sam Wells closed the throttle, but it was too late.

CHAPTER VII.—A Confederate Victory.

Even as Sam closed the throttle and applied the air-brakes, the gunner pulled the lanyard. There was a terrible flash, a boom, and an awful shock. It seemed as if the locomotive was being torn all to pieces. Sam and his companions were hurled to the floor of the cab. The air was full of flying debris, and they were cut and gashed, but fortunately not seriously hurt. As quickly as he could recover himself, Sam was upon his feet. The train was coming to a stop, for it yet kept the rails. Nothing could be seen of the gun or the artillerymen. Sam saw how matters were, though very quickly. The cannon-ball had been aimed too high to strike the boiler of the locomotive. It had taken a slice out of the smoke-stack, and reduced the top of the cab to kindling-wood, and plowed its way through the roofs of three cars. On the other hand, the locomotive had struck the gun-carriage and the cow-catcher had neatly picked it up and flung it into the ditch.

Two of the gunners, who had been unable to get out of the way in time, had been instantly killed. It was a narrow escape for those on board the engine. Had the cannon-ball struck the boiler, the locomotive would have blown up in an instant. This would likely have killed all on board. The train had now come to a stop. Orderly Vandyke had regained his feet, as had Bill Clemmens.

"Great ramrods!" cried the fireman, in his bluff way. "I thought we were going to kingdom come that time, for sure. Where are we, anyway?"

"Safe," cried Sam, in reply, "but it was a close call."

"Where is the gun we seen in the middle of the track?"

"Out in the ditch."

Bill scratched his head confusedly. But now that the train had come to a stop the Confederate troops began to pile out of the cars. The cannon, not much injured, was reclaimed from the ditch and brought into service. The Confederate reinforcements marched away to the scene of action through a cut near. Sam had orders to go on to Deep Pass, and return later to Clear Lake, making the usual run. He had no desire to visit the battlefield, even had it been feasible for him to do so. Accordingly, as soon as the troops were disembarked, Sam and Bill mended the break in the smokestack the best way they could, and started on for the rest of the run. The express was thundering on it was to Deep Pass. An hour and a half later the battered train rolled into the depot. Quite a large crowd was collected, eager to hear the news from the battlefield. Sam could give them none save the fact that he had brought down reinforcements. However, telegraphic dispatches were being received every few minutes from the field itself. The damaged locomotive and cars were sent to the repair shops, and a new engine was placed in commission for Sam to return with. As it would be an hour yet before it would be necessary to return, Sam and Bill repaired to a restaurant and partook of a lunch. When they returned to the depot the dispatches were coming thick and fast, and the crowd was much excited. Sam read the bulletin with interest. Suddenly a fresh one was posted which read as follows:

"COL. BEN'S VICTORY.

"Hurrah for Southern valor! All hail to Dixie's heroes! The Yankees are running! Col. Ben is in pursuit. The appearance of reinforcements in the shape of brave Lieut. Vane's volunteer company from Clear Lake turns the tide. The Yankees under Major Vincent retire. No more danger that Clear Lake will be occupied by the foe. A damaging blow to the Northern cause. Fully six hundred lost upon the Union side."

Sam Wells experienced a sort of pang. He realized that the bringing down of the reinforcements by himself had given defeat to the Union cause. While he was loyal to his duties as engineer in the employ of Mr. North, he yet felt a powerful sympathy for the Northern cause, which he felt to be right. The locomotive which had been assigned for the return was hardly as good as Old Ninety. But Sam brought the train to the platform and passengers clambered aboard. The chronometer marked just two minutes of starting-time when the telegraph operator came along to the cab.

"A message for you, Sam Wells," he said.

Sam took the message and read it. His face paled a trifle. It was from Mr. North at Clear Lake.

"To Sam Wells: Be on your guard on the return. I have news that Bill Hurd intends to lay for you in Deep Pass. I have sent special with armed guard to meet you. Side track and wait at Black Gap.

MANDEVILLE NORTH."

CHAPTER VIII.—A Treacherous Deed.

The bluff stoker read the message and shrugged his shoulders.

"Humph!" he muttered. "We don't stop for that, eh, Sam?"

"I think not."

At that moment the gong rang. Sam opened the throttle and the train was soon bowling along over the rails. Mile after mile sped by at a fifty-mile pace, and suddenly Bill Clemmens turned to Sam and cried:

"We're two miles from Black River Bridge, Sam. Do ye know, that is where I reckon the guerrillas will lay for us."

It was rapidly nearing the sunset hour. Shadows were already beginning to settle down thick and fast. Bill Clemmens hung far out of the cab-window and kept up a good watch of the track ahead. A high forbidding range of hills now hove into view. The train dashed through a cut, and came to a wide chasm, over which was a high trestle bridge. It was at this point that Bill Clemmens had feared an attack from the guerrillas. The train swept on over the high trestle, and emerging into open country, bore down for the Black Gap. Sam drew a breath of relief.

"We're out of the woods, Bill," he shouted. "I don't see a guerrilla; do you?"

"Nary one."

"I don't believe they'll tackle us this trip."

But Bill shook his head.

"Don't be too sure," he replied. "We ain't through the Gap yet."

This was true, as Sam knew, but the young en-

gineer remembered the promise of Mr. North to send an armed guard down to their assistance. He knew that they were not ten miles from Black Gap station and the siding. If the guerrillas intended making an attack it was full time. But Sam believed their fears groundless. The alarm might have been a false one, or, on the other hand, the guerrillas might have heard of the armed guard coming and deferred their plans. However this was they certainly did not put in an appearance. The express was given the right of way and went on to Clear Lake. The express thundered into the depot on time, and Sam, alighting from the cab, met Mr. North, who was delighted to see him.

"I am so glad you got through all safe, Sam," he cried. "I am hopeful that Hurd has given up the game for good."

But Sam shook his head.

"I cannot believe that," he said. "We must not relax vigilance."

He was somewhat fagged out with the thrilling incidents of the day and sought his lodgings with the intention of retiring for necessary sleep. But his landlady met him at the door with a note in her hand.

"This came for you to-day, Sam. I don't know who brought it, for it was left under the door."

Sam took the epistle. The handwriting was fair and bold, and breaking the seal he read:

"Sam Wells: I have just learned of a very important scheme against you. I am your friend and would not like to see you come to harm. If you will meet me to-night at ten, at the corner of Cross and Black streets, I will tell you all about it. I would come to your house, but I am watched, and if seen talking with you my fate would be sealed. Very cordially,

"Matt Jones."

Sam knew the supposed writer of this epistle well. Matt was a former railroad man, and as he declared, one of Sam's warmest friends. The young engineer was interested. He partook of a hearty meal and then went down to the round-house. Then he started for Cross and Black streets, the corner he knew being near the bridge over the Swift River which emptied into Clear Lake near. It was a dark night, and Sam noted with something like surprise that the lights on the bridge were out.

"That is queer," he mused. "Perhaps the lamp-lighter forgot them."

He approached the street corner and saw a dark form standing upon the curbstone. Sam halted and said:

"Hullo! Who is it?"

"Are you Sam Wells?"

"Yes."

"All right. Come ahead. I have been waiting for you. I am Matt Jones."

"Well, what is it, Matt?"

"Come deeper into the shadows. They are watching me all the while, but I believe we are safe here. Now!"

The latter word was spoken quick and sharp. In that instant from behind Sam received a dull, crunching blow upon the skull. The trap had worked well. The young engineer knew no more. His lifeless body lay upon the ground. Two dark-

clad men bent over him and one felt his heart, whispering:

"By Jove, Vane, it was cleverly done. He walked right into it."

"You're right, Bill Hurd!"

"Now for the bridge. Give us a lift. Steady now!"

The two assassins bent down and lifted Sam's insensible form. They carried it to the bridge parapet. One moment they waited and then with a swing over went the body. There was a dull splash in the water below, what seemed like a sharp cry and all was still. Vane clutched Hurd's arm.

"Did ve hear that?"

"What?"

"The cry!"

"Pshaw! It was the wind whistling under the bridge."

The two villains slunk away into the darkness. Along the river-bank they went for some distance until they came to a shanty which stood in a secluded spot. There was a light in the shanty. At the door two armed guerrillas stood and horses stood nearby. Chairs and a table were in the shanty and upon the table was a lantern. By its rays, Bill Hurd, the guerrilla chief, and Reginald Vane stood face to face. Hurd was a stocky, cruel-visaged ruffian in the half-uniform of a Confederate general.

"Well, Reggie Vane," he said, sinking into a chair, "talk right at me now. I've mighty little time—what's your plans?"

"I will give them to you right now," said Vane. "Part of them have been accomplished to-night."

"Ah!"

"That young skunk of an engineer is out of my way forever."

"So he is."

"Now, I want old North settled and his railroad broken up. Then, with the fairest girl in the South to-day, Eunice North, in my power, I shall be a winner."

"All right," said Hurd, gruffly. "What will it be to me?"

"Ten thousand dollars."

"Where will you get the money?"

"It is mine. My father settled fifty thousand upon me a year ago."

The guerrilla chief arose.

"It is settled," he said. "Old North and his railroad shall be sent to perdition. Then I'll come for the ten thousand, and if it is not paid, you will follow the others. Good-night, I'm off."

CHAPTER IX.—A Base Slander.

The guerrilla chief unceremoniously left the shanty and vaulted into the saddle. He gave sharp and ringing orders to his men, and then the clanking of their sabers and the clatter of their horses' hoofs vanished in the distance. Reginald Vane's face was demoniac in its expression of triumph. Vane repaired to a drinking-saloon in the center of the town, and there for some hours drowned all recollection of the dark crime upon his soul in the drinking-cup. The next morning he arose and walked down to the depot. All was quiet there, for the regular trains were not running, owing to the strike of the cowardly engineers.

"Ha!" chuckled the villain. "The railroad is upon its last legs. I'll humble you, Mandeville North, proud aristocrat that you are, and your haughty daughter shall sue for my favor yet. My day is at hand."

The villain, thus chuckling to himself, walked the platform. Suddenly a carriage drove up and Mr. North alighted. Vane saw him enter his private office. The arrogance of the villain's nature asserted itself and he decided upon an astounding move. He followed the magnate boldly into his office. Mr. North turned to see the villain standing before him. Vane bowed low.

"Well," said the railroad president, tersely, "what will you have, sir?"

"I have come to see you upon a very important mission," said the villain, smoothly.

"Be so kind as to state it quickly. My time is valuable this morning."

"More so than usual?" asked the villain, with sarcasm.

"Not in your case," retorted Mr. North, with asperity.

"My father was always your warmest friend."

"I respect your father, sir."

"But not me?"

"Judge for yourself."

"Really, this is too bad. I fear, then, that I shall not have much chance in the question I have to put to you."

"I can give you no encouragement until I know what it is."

"Well, sir, it concerns your daughter," said Vane, coolly.

Mr. North gazed at the impudent young villain a moment, while a desire was uppermost in his breast to kick him out of the office.

"Then we will consider the question settled," he declared. "I cannot discuss her with you, sir."

"But listen—"

"Enough! Not a word."

"But I will speak. You have made a fool of yourself. I will prove to you that I come as a friend to warn you."

"Of what?"

"Of the viper you have taken to your bosom."

"To whom do you refer?"

"To Sam Wells, who I can prove to you has deserted you to fly to the Union army. He has been a traitor and a spy from the first."

It was a bold and stunning declaration. Yet Mr. North would as soon have thought of suicide as of placing faith in it. Mr. North gazed steadily and keenly at the villain.

"There is nothing on earth can shake my confidence in Sam Wells," he said.

"Now listen to reason. You know he is a Yankee dog and thoroughly in sympathy with the Northern cause."

"I know Sam is a Northerner, but he is faithful to his duties. I am not as fully in sympathy with this war as many are. I believe it is all wrong."

Vane shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't you know, sir, that you are not yourself in a very safe position?"

"What do you mean?"

"Ah, you are not in a position to hear what is daily whispered round the town about you. There are many who doubt your loyalty to Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy."

Mr. North laughed contemptuously.

"That was disposed of long ago," he declared. "It was the vengeful invention of a number of that cowardly gang of engineers."

"But those same engineers are loyal Southerners."

"If they are types of our Southern grit, then I have no use for it," replied Mr. Norton. "But enough. We will not protract this discussion."

"Very well, sir," said Vane, with assumed dignity. "You reject my advances of friendship and good faith. When you are, by-and-by, delivered up to your enemies then you will think of it. I can tell you that you and Miss Eunice are being misled. That is all, sir. Take the warning. Good-day."

Mr. North looked for Sam's coming that day in vain. The young engineer did not turn up and the express failed to go out. The railway magnate was not only surprised, but alarmed.

"It is queer," he reflected, "this is the first time that Sam has failed me. What does it mean?"

Then he thought of Vane's words. A chill struck him. Was it true after all that Sam had really enlisted in the Union Army? Mr. North went home with darkened brow and a turbulent state of mind.

"Eunice," he said, at the evening meal, "have you seen Sam to-day?"

The young girl gave a start.

"Why, no," she replied. "Was he not at the depot?"

"No."

For a moment Eunice North sat white and rigid. Then gradually she arose stiffly from her chair. Mr. North looked up with alarm.

"Eunice," she cried, "are you ill?"

"N—no!" she said, steadily. "Do you mean to say, father, that Sam cannot be found in this town?"

"Nowhere. I sent to his lodgings and everywhere else."

A long, shuddering cry escaped the young girl's lips.

"Oh, heavens!" she cried. "It has come."

"Courage, my daughter," said Mr. North. "Do not repine. If his craven heart cannot be true, rather congratulate yourself—"

"Stop!" she cried, in a full, firm voice. "Do you think I doubt Sam Wells? Never! He has not deserted us, but harm has come to him, and we must rouse the town to search for and save him!"

CHAPTER X.—The Riot and What Became of It.

The declaration of Eunice North was impulsive and forceful, and came from the depths of her soul with the conviction of one gifted with inspiration.

"When did you first learn that Sam was missing?" she asked.

"This morning."

"Who told you?"

"Reginald Vane."

Something like a sobbing cry came from her white lips.

"Then he it was who told you that Sam had deserted us to enlist in the Union Army."

"Yes."

"And you believed him?"

Mr. North was bitterly stung with remorse by these reflections.

"I did not!" he cried, "but when Sam failed to report, I—I acknowledge that I wronged him."

"Father, you are blind," she said. "I can see the whole deadly game. Reginald Vane seeks to put Sam out of the way because he stands foremost in my favor and because he hates him. Oh, heaven help me to find Sam alive! If harm has come to him—"

She stamped her little foot.

"The Southern fire is in my veins," she cried. "Woe to you, Reginald Vane, if you have done harm to the man I love!"

The railway magnate stepped in front of his daughter.

"Where are you going, my dear?" he asked.

"Do not detain me. I am going to find Sam."

"Not alone?"

"Yes."

"But that is not prudent. There are better ways of procedure. Listen to reason, my daughter."

Mr. North forced her gently into a chair, and then pulled the bell-cord. A servant appeared.

"James," cried the millionaire, "ride at once as fast as you can to the office of the chief of police and tell him to come here at once."

The diminutive little Irish servant bowed low.

"All roight, sor," he replied.

Mr. North then rang up every man servant in his employ. He sent them to different parts of the town, post-haste, to employ searchers. In due time the chief of police arrived at the mansion. He held a brief conference with Mr. North.

"I want you, first of all, to arrest Reginald Vane on suspicion," said the magnate. "Lock him up and hold him!"

"That would be a foolish move, sir," protested the officer.

"Why?"

"Because if he is the guilty party it would simply put him upon his guard. To catch him, we must not let him think that we suspect him."

"But Sam's fate must be learned at once. I fear he has been killed."

"Every part of the town shall be searched," declared the chief. "Most of the murders occur along the Swift River. I will have the banks patrolled and the river dragged, even into the lake."

A few moments later the chief was gone. Before morning the whole town knew of Sam's mysterious disappearance, and the search that was being made for him. The better class of the people felt keen regrets, and were wholly in sympathy with the quest. But there was a motley element, friends of the rebellious engineers and a gang brought together by Vane, who made sneering remarks upon the subject. Mr. North was sharply criticised for the particular favor shown a Yankee. A knot of excited partisans on a street corner attracted a crowd. The crowd swelled to the proportions of a mob. A hot-headed scion of the Confederacy mounted a stoop and began to harangue the mob. The cry arose:

"Down with traitors! Hang the railroad king who is secretly in sympathy with the Yankees! Long live slavery!"

The shout went up, and men crazed with the spirit of the hour seized rude weapons and swarmed down the street toward the depot. Mr. North was just going out to his carriage as the men ap-

peared. He faced the angry mob with surprising calmness.

"Crush the traitor!"

"Hang him up!"

Mr. North faced his foes with great coolness. He raised his hand as if to enjoin silence. As by common impulse the crowd subsided and a cry went up:

"A speech! Give him a chance to make his speech!"

Mr. North flashed a critical and stern glance about him, and raising his voice, cried:

"What does all this mean? Why am I set upon in this manner?"

One of the crowd was pushed forward by the others to act as spokesman. He was one of the discharged engineers.

"It means, Mr. North," he said, coolly, "that you are known to have sympathetic feelings for the cause of the Yankees. As you are the richest man in this town, it means great harm to the town and the Southern people. We want to know if you are loyal to the stars and bars or not?"

Mr. North gazed at the fellow a moment keenly, and then in a scathing voice replied:

"The question is one which I would demean my dignity by answering. Everybody knows that I am a Southern man and stand by the Confederacy. Sam Wells, whom I have championed, is a Northern boy, but not in arms against the South. Until he takes that attitude I will not regard him as an enemy."

"But he has left ye to jine the Yanks!" cried a voice in the crowd.

"That is false, I believe," replied the railroad magnate. "I am sure that he has been foully dealt with. I shall soon learn, for detectives are working up the case. If I find that Sam has really deserted me, then I am done with him. On the other hand, none of you can deny but that he has done his duty by us all, as witness his taking off that train with reinforcements down to Black Gap. Does that look as if he is recreant to his duty?"

A faint cheer went up. The public opinion among the better minded ones was beginning to change.

"Boys," continued Mr. North, seriously, "you have as yet suffered no injury. On the contrary, you have done me injury most irreparable. Go back to your homes and think the matter over. When you have good evidence that Mandeville North is a traitor, then you may come and hang him. But you cannot do it to-day. I shall resist to the last drop of blood in my veins!"

Mr. North stepped into his carriage and drove off. No one sought to stay him, and slowly the crowd dispersed.

CHAPTER XI.—A Prisoner

When Sam Wells received the crushing blow upon the head delivered by the villain Hurd, his senses left him.

It would have seemed that the blow was a fatal one, but it was not, and it was only Vane's great excitement that prevented his discovering this fact.

Down went the young engineer's body and struck the water with a loud splash. The current

was quite swift here and he came to the surface quickly.

The shock of striking the cold water of the river brought Sam out of the spell of unconsciousness upon him.

He gave a gasping cry, waved his arms wildly and struck out, but went down again.

The next time he came up, however he was sufficiently aroused to be able to strike out. He was a good swimmer.

But this had brought the young engineer to the head of a series of rapids. Before he could make a move to avoid it he was hurled into their midst.

But before he had taken a dozen strokes he suddenly found himself unable to go further. He would have drowned then and there but for the fact that a large plank floating along offered him support.

He drew himself half-fainting across this and allowed the current to take him whither it would.

How long he floated thus he never knew. He was partly unconscious for some time. The loss of blood and the shock had nigh finished him.

He could see nothing of the lights of the city and knew that he must have passed far beyond its limits.

He had in reality been carried five miles down the river current. Hours passed and it was not far from daylight.

The plank swung into an eddy and floated near the shore. Sam slipped from it and swam the remaining distance.

Crawling up the steep bank, he sank upon the greensward. Drowsiness came over him and he slept.

When he awoke, the sun was shining in his face.

He managed to regain his feet. He was covered with blood and felt quite weak.

But gradually his strength came back, and he crept down to the water's edge and bathed his head.

He felt better now, and a clear recollection of all came to him. His had certainly been a narrow escape.

He rested for some while upon the river-bank, and then believed that he felt strong enough to walk back to the city.

"The express must go out on time!" he said, firmly. "I will be there!"

It was easy enough to find his way back to the city. He had simply to follow the river-bank all the way.

But he had not proceeded one hundred yards when he received a thrilling surprise. There was the tramp of feet in the bushes and the clank of arms.

The next moment he was startled to find himself confronted by half a dozen soldiers in the uniform of the Union.

"Hands up! Surrender!" cried the sergeant of the squad.

There was no alternative but to obey. Naturally Sam felt no alarm, for he was a Union man himself.

"I surrender!" he replied.

"We have got the cursed spy!" cried the sergeant, excitedly. "Tie his hands behind him, boys, and march him into camp!"

"Spy!" exclaimed Sam, in surprise. "Aren't you mistaken? I am no spy!"

"Who are you, then?"

"I am Sam Wells, engineer on the Clear Lake & Deep Pass Railroad!"

"Look here! You say you're an engineer on that Clear Lake Railroad?"

"Yes."

"That don't wash. Do you think the rebels would keep a Union man to run their engines for them? Not much!"

"But I am not a soldier. I am a civilian, and Mr. North, the owner of the railroad, is not a strict partisan."

Argument was of no avail. Sam saw that his position was a desperate one.

Then a sudden thought flashed across him. He knew that Major Vincent was once more in command of his troops, having escaped from the Confederate lines.

"Hold on!" he cried. "I tell you who will vouch for me."

"Eh!" exclaimed the sergeant, gruffly. "Who is that?"

"Major Vincent."

A growl escaped the old soldier's lips.

"Our orders from Major Vincent is to shoot every rebel spy found in our lines."

A groan of horror escaped Sam's lips. He knew that it was useless to plead further, but he hoped when camp was reached to be able to prove his claims.

Through the scrub growth the march continued. Soon the country became more open, and then, mounting a rise of ground, the Union camp was seen.

Fully ten thousand Union troops were here quartered under the command of Major Vincent.

They were waiting orders to throw themselves upon Crossley's forces and Clear Lake. The battle was most imminent.

Sam was led into the camp and held under guard. For an hour he remained thus, when he saw the sergeant coming with a couple of soldiers.

The party came up to Sam, and the sergeant said:

"Squint your eye at him, Jake, and tell me if he looks like Jones?"

The two soldiers almost instantly replied:

"He is the man."

"You are mistaken, gentlemen," said Sam firmly. "You wrong me much. My name is Sam Wells, and I am not a spy."

His likeness must have been that of Jones, the spy, for his assertion was not believed. He was marched promptly to the dead line, and stood over a rough wooden box, which was to serve as his coffin.

The sergeant's squad then marched back fifty paces and placed cartridges in their guns. It was evident that they meant to execute Sam as a rebel spy.

CHAPTER XII.—The Birth-Mark.

Sam Wells, the young engineer, had faced death in its most frightful forms, coolly and calmly, upon his engine.

Fear was not a component part of his plucky nature.

But in all his career he had not felt so averse to meeting death as now

The sergeant was a man who, in times of peace, could not have done harm to a fellow being.

But the strict discipline of army service and the ironclad rules of war will make callous even the most charitable of souls.

"Ready—men!" he cried. "Aim! One—two—"

This was as far as he got.

A black horse, bearing a tall, distinguished rider, dashed between the muzzles of the guns and the prisoner. A gleaming sword went up in the air.

"Hold!"

The sergeant stepped forward and saluted. The squad dropped their arms to parade-rest.

Out of the saddle sprang the rider.

It needed but a glance for mutual recognition between him and Sam Wells," he cried "what does this mean? How came you here?"

"Your men mistook me for Bill Jones, the spy." Major Vincent turned angrily upon the cowering sergeant.

"You blockhead!" he cried. "You would have shot one of the noblest men on earth. Why did you not come to me, sir?"

"Your orders, major, were to shoot every spy found in the lines."

"But this man is not a spy."

"He is the dead picture of Jones."

Major Vincent took a look at Sam.

"By Jupiter! that is so," he cried. "You were not wholly to blame, sergeant. But it was a close call. How lucky I came along. Sam, my young friend, I am delighted to be able to return the service done me."

"I had given up hope," replied the young engineer, "but now that it is all over, let us forget it."

"Right you are, Sam; but how came you in the lines?"

Sam briefly told his story.

"That Lieutenant Vane is a scoundrel!" he declared, forcibly. "He ought to hang. But come to my tent."

"I am very anxious to get back home," declared Sam; "the express cannot go out without me—"

Then he turned deathly white, staggered and fell into the major's arms.

"I see you are sick, my lad," cried the major. "Todd, go for a surgeon. Help me, men, to carry him to my tent."

He was carried tenderly to the major's tent and a surgeon cared for him. His wound was dressed and he felt better.

But it was decided that he could not go home that day.

The major was called away for a time on field duty. But he returned later, and entering the tent, sat down by Sam's side. His manner was strongly excited.

"Sam," he said, calmly, to all outward appearance, "when the surgeon was dressing your wound this morning I noticed, under the locks upon your temple, a peculiar mark similar to a maltese cross."

"Yes," replied Sam, with a smile; mother says that was my birth-mark."

The major was strangely excited.

He arose and walked twice up and down the tent.

Then he paused and lifted the yellow hair from his own temples.

"Do you see that?" he said, tensely.

Sam was electrified.

"Why," he gasped, "you have got just the same kind of a mark."

"Is it not queer?"

"It is."

The major gazed steadily at Sam.

"Sam, I want to ask you a question."

"Well?"

"Are you an orphan?"

"Yes."

"Who was your father?"

The young engineer heaved a sigh.

"I know not," he replied "I never saw him. He died when I was a baby."

Major Vincent clasped and unclasped his hands excitedly. He once more strode up and down the tent.

"Sam," he said, after a time, and there was a peculiar ring in his voice, "it is very peculiar that you and I should have the same mark on the temple."

Sam looked steadily at the major.

"I agree with you," he said.

"I want to tell you my life. Once I was a happy man of family, living in the North. I had a sweet wife and a baby boy. That boy had this same mark upon him."

Sam listened as if fascinated.

"That is very queer," he said.

"It is."

"I suppose the baby boy is grown to manhood now."

The major's brow knit with an expression of great pain.

"Ah, that knowledge has been denied me," he said.

"Denied you?"

"Yes?" asked Sam in surprise.

"While yet an infant he was stolen from me by an enemy whom I have tried in vain to track. Stolen from the cradle, and from that day to this I have not learned aught of my darling. The blow killed my wife. I have since lived only in the hope that I would find my boy."

Sam's sympathetic soul was aroused.

"Oh, I wish I could aid you!" he said.

The major turned.

He came to Sam's side and gazed deeply into his eyes.

"Perhaps you can," he said. "You have her eyes. It may be. And there is the similarity of birth-mark——"

"What do you mean?"

"You will understand when I ask you this question. Tell me the truth, Sam; was Mrs. Wells your real mother? To the best of your belief, is this true?"

Sam was so dumfounded by this question that for a moment he could not recover himself.

think on account of the similarity in the birth-marks that I might be your son?"

"That is it," cried Major Vincent, with great excitement.

Sam noted the look in his yearning eyes. He held his hand out to him.

"Something draws me strangely toward you," he said. "I wish you were my father."

"And something tells me that you are my baby boy."

Sam shook his head.

"No," he said.

"What? Are you quite sure that your right name is Wells?"

"I have no reason to doubt it," replied Sam. "My mother has often told me of my father, of the place where I was born and the incidents of my early life. No, Major Vincent, I cannot be your son. The similarity of birth-marks is only a strange coincidence, that is all."

"Of course," said the major, with a deep breath. "My lost baby is no doubt safe with his mother in heaven. But—I shall love you all the more, Sam, on account of the birth-mark. I should like to be always counted your dearest friend."

"And you may be sure," cried Sam, "we will always be good friends."

The interview was over, but Sam did not forget it.

The major was called from the tent. He did not return for some hours.

Sam was up and dressed and quite himself.

"Ah!" exclaimed the major. "You are feeling better, Sam?"

"Very much, sir."

"I suppose now you are anxious to return to your duties in town?"

"I am, sir."

"Very well. I will give you a safe passport through the lines."

Major Vincent did this, and appointed a guard of escort for a safe distance beyond the lines.

A short while later Sam was beyond the Union picket line on his way to Clear Lake.

He was not far from Clear Lake when a startling incident occurred.

Passing through a glade he heard voices, and through a screen of foliage saw two men, who had seemingly met by appointment in this secluded spot.

What was more, the men were familiar to Sam.

One was Reginald Vane, and the other the renegade and guerrilla, Bill Hurd. They were talking excitedly.

In an instant Sam was interested.

Hurd was speaking, and every word he uttered came plainly to Sam's hearing.

"If there is anything I can do to ambush Vincent, I'll do it!" he gritted. "I hate him most cordially, and it is a question of death between us."

"Well, of course, Vincent is a stranger to me," said Vane, "but what little I have seen of him leads me to share your sentiments."

"Ah, but I have greater reasons than you for crushing him."

"What are they?"

"Well, to begin, years ago Jim Vincent and I were chums at West Point. In those days we were the best of friends. I liked Jim well."

"And we might have been friends to this day."

CHAPTER XIII.—Sam Overhears Important Things

It required some little time for Sam to recover his wits after the startling query of Major Vincent.

Then across his befogged mind there strayed an inkling of the major's meaning.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. "I understand you. You

but for the fact that we both fell in love with the same girl.

"Of course we then became enemies. I was madly in love with the girl. I had never loved before, nor have I ever loved since. I flattered myself that I had May Deane's heart. When Vincent appeared upon the scene he upset my plans and won her affections away from me.

"I could never forgive him. From that hour to this, we have bitterly hated each other. The girl became his wife. I was left to misery and unrequited vows. Ah, but I was determined to have revenge!

"The opportunity came. One child blessed their union, a boy. I waited my opportunity and stole the child away. I put it in a safe place, and Jim Vincent has all his life searched in vain for his darling. His wife died. I had my revenge!"

Sam in his hiding-place had listened with inexpressible horror to this awful narrative.

So it was Hurd, the guerrilla chief, who had wronged Major Vincent.

Vane laughed in a derisive, chuckling sort of way.

"Well, you did get hunk with him in fine shape," he cried. "But you will have a chance yet to lay him out altogether."

"I believe so. But now we understand each other thoroughly."

"Yes."

"You want the girl, and I am to help you get her. You will have ten thousand all ready?"

"When you get the girl."

They now moved away, and soon were out of sight. Sam heard the hoofbeats of galloping horses a few moments later.

The young engineer was completely overcome.

"Good heavens!" he gasped. "It is Eunice that they mean. Reginald Vane, villain, coward and monster, you shall never succeed! If you do harm to one hair of Eunice North's head, I will hunt you to death."

The young engineer was feverish in his excitement.

He set out with all haste. It was a long and quite wearisome tramp, but finally the town came in sight.

Soon Sam had struck one of the main streets. He had intended going to his lodgings, but a street corner met a posse of armed men.

To his astonishment they surrounded him.

"Now we've got the Yankee spy!" they cried. "Give him short shrift. Hang him up to the nearest tree!"

In less time that it takes to tell it the street was filled with a surging mob. Sam's position was a thrilling one.

The young engineer was dumfounded.

He expostulated in vain.

"What do you mean by pouncing upon me in this manner?" he cried.

"Haven't you just come from the Yankee camp?"

"Yes."

It was the worst answer that Sam Wells could possibly have made.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Tables Turned.

For a moment Sam's life was not worth a straw. Then he looked up and saw an evil face among his foes.

It was that of Reginald Vane.

"That's right!" he cried, "he is a spy! String him up!"

The threat would certainly have been carried into execution but for an incident. Suddenly there appeared upon the scene more armed men, and at their head was Bill Clemmens. The brave stoker had organized a party of searchers for the young engineer when he was discovered to be missing, and had been encouraged in his efforts by Eunice North. And now, when Bill saw his mate in this dangerous position, his joy at seeing him alive was hardly exceeded by his anger at the treatment Sam was receiving.

"Get out of the way, ye hounds!" he roared. "Don't one of ye lay a hand upon that boy. Give us a lift, boys, and we'll clean the dogs out."

A number of the Confederate soldiers in the crowd lowered their bayoneted guns and formed a circle about Sam. Bill Clemmens whirled his rusty sword aloft and cried:

"Ye'll only take him away over my dead body!"

"Bill, don't be rash. They will never dare shoot me. Keep cool."

It was Sam who spoke. His words had a good effect upon the impetuous stoker. Vane's face was the picture of evil triumph and vindictive passion.

"I will settle matters right now!" he muttered under his breath. "The case will then be ended."

He was about to give the order to the soldiers to march the prisoner away when the tramp of feet and the clank of arms was heard in a side street. The next moment a corporal's guard came up with breathless haste. Quick as a flash they surrounded Vane and the corporal sauted.

"Lieutenant Vane, I believe?"

"It is, corporal. What now?"

"I have here, sir, a warrant for your arrest!"

"For me!" cried the villain, furiously. "Who has dared to do this thing? Who?"

"Colonel Crossley, your superior officer, sir," replied the corporal.

There was no way out of it. Vane bowed his head, the guard closed about him, and he was marched away. For some moments the crowd were too dazed to move or speak. Then Bill Clemmens rushed up and embraced Sam.

"Hooray!" he cried. "What luck for us. I told 'em ye'd come back, Sam, an' I'm mighty glad to see ye."

All now crowded about the young engineer. It was a complete revulsion in feeling, and so excited was everybody that they broke out into wild cheers. Sam was escorted down the street like a conquering hero. But at the first opportunity he escaped from the crowd and went to his lodgings. But he had not been there long when Mr. North's carriage came to the door with a request from the magnate and Eunice to take tea with them. Sam entered the carriage and was driven thither. Mr. North and Eunice met him at the door, and their delight was inexpressible. Eunice rushed into his arms and wept in her joy.

"Sam," said Mr. North, fulsomely, "even I thought that you had deserted us. Eunice alone believed in you."

Sam's eyes met those of Eunice. More passed between them in the glance than could have been expressed in many words. It was a happy evening, and Sam remembered it all his life. At an early hour in the evening he went back to his

lodgings. But at the door his landlady met him. "A letter for you, Sam," she said. "Someone left it under the door."

CHAPTER XV.—The Fight in the Round-House.

Sam was not a little surprised, and wondered who the letter could be from, as he did not recognize the chirography. He went to his room and there broke the seal. It was written in a coarse, sprawling fashion, as follows:

"Sam Wells: You are a marked man. Don't forget these words. I am one who is on the inside and know. I don't mean you any harm, but others do, and they mean to have your life. Be careful how you make your next trip on the engine. See Bill Clemmens and have the engine-house watched.

"From a Would-be Friend."

Sam read this astounding epistle several times before he was able to fully grasp its meaning.

"Well," he muttered, "this is a very fine state of affairs. So that is the game, eh? We will see about it."

He donned his hat and coat once more and started for the round-house. It was quite dark, as he entered the yard, but he saw a light in the round-house and believed that Bill Clemmens was there oiling up for the morrow. Sam went unhesitatingly to the side door to the round-house. He threw it open. All was shadowy as far as he could see, but he stepped boldly in, crying in a cheery voice:

"Hello, Bill! doin' a little oiling?"

"Yes, pard; come in."

The reply did not sound like Bill's voice, but not a shadow of suspicion crossed Sam's mind. He started along the gloomy walk toward the engine, when suddenly two dark forms sprang out of the shadows. Sam saw his foes coming just in time. He dodged a couple of powerful blows, and quick as a flash let out with one of his fists. One of his assailants went down, but the other grappled with Sam. A terrific struggle followed. The young engineer quickly found that he had a powerful man to wrestle with. But Sam was quick and nerry, and made a good battle. Suddenly into the round-house sprang a herculean form, and a stentorian voice roared:

"Hey! what the mischief is going on here? Get out of this, ye skylarkers, or I'll do ye harm."

It was Bill Clemmens. The appearance of the stoker was the breaking up of the struggle. With a yell, both contestants broke away, and before Sam could restrain them had disappeared in the gloom. Bill rushed into Sam's arms and, in astonishment, cried:

"By thunder, if it ain't you, Sam Wells. What the mischief is up?"

"Mischief for sure," cried Sam. "Do you know who those chaps were?"

"I'm blowed if I do."

Both rushed out into the yard and tried to get a sight of the rascals, but this was in vain. They had disappeared.

"Do you suppose that they really meant to do the engine harm?" asked Sam.

Bill shook his head.

"What good would that do 'em?" he asked.

"Well, I cannot imagine," replied Sam. "However, let us look the locomotive over."

This they proceeded to do.

They made a careful examination of the locomotive in every part; but nothing was discovered out of the way.

The idea was then abandoned. Bill waited until the watchman came, and then both he and Sam went home.

The next morning Sam went down to the depot and saw Mr. North. The railroad magnate was very glad to see him.

"I want to see a special down to Deep Pass," he said. "Will you take it down, Sam?"

"Of course I will."

"I will send one hundred armed men with you in the express car. I think that will be ample guard."

"I shall not anticipate any attack from the guerrillas," said Sam. "I think we need have no fears on that score."

"I agree with you."

Sam went down to the round-house, and with Bill Clemmens overhauled the engine. The stoker was sober.

"I don't know why it is, Sam," he said "but I feel kind of queer. The old machine don't make steam just as she always does. We looked her over carefully, did we not?"

"Certainly," replied Sam, in surprise.

"Look here, Sam," and the brave stoker's hand trembled as he held a gold watch. "If anything ever happens to me see that this watch is sent to my mother. Will you do it?"

Sam assured Bill that he would do this. To the stoker up, he cried:

"But you are depressed, Bill. Shake it off."

"I will, mate," replied Bill, with an effort.

Ten minutes later the train was in the depot. Mr. North came out and beckoned Sam, who got out of the cab and joined the magnate some distance away.

"Now, Sam," began the magnate, but he went no further.

Something caused him to pause. There was that peculiar hush which always precedes a catastrophe. The same expression of horror was upon Sam's face. Then there was an unearthly, a terrible explosion. The ground shook as with an earthquake and the air was full of flying pieces of iron and debris. A glance told the awful truth. The locomotive had blown up!

CHAPTER XVI.—The Bridge Burners.

The spot where they stood was one of those spared by the explosion. Both were jarred, but not even scratched. The dull reverberation had not died away when a horrible thought came to Shore Line Sam.

"Poor Bill!" he gasped. "He has met his fate!"

In an instant the vicinity was thronged. The noise of the explosion had aroused the whole town, and people came rushing to the spot. Many, in the excitement, fancied that the Yankees had taken possession of the town, and that their artillery was booming. But the scene at the depot explained itself. As quickly as the smoke and steam clouds cleared away Sam rushed to the

spot to look for the mangled remains of faithful Bill Clemmens. And this resulted in a most joyous surprise. Instead of finding the torn and riddled form of his mate, Sam saw him come reeling through the steam clouds toward him. There was blood upon his face and person, but by what was a seeming miracle, Bill had escaped death. At the moment that the boiler exploded he had been in the tender shoveling coal. This alone had been the saving of his life.

"Hurrah!" cried the young engineer. "You are safe, Bill, but how on earth did you come out of it?"

"I—I don't know," exclaimed the stoker, in a dazed way. "What happened, anyway? I suppose the old machine went up, didn't she? Or was it a Yankee shell hit her?"

"She blew up for certain," replied Sam, "but the mystery is how you ever got out of it alive."

"But I did," said the stoker, recovering himself. "For which I have reason to be thankful, I suppose."

"You are right, Bill," cried Mr. North. "There would have been sorrowful hearts around here if you had been killed."

A gang of men was set at work at once to clear the track. But the express was made up with a new engine upon a side track. The express left the depot some thirty minutes late, but Sam had a clear track, and did not fear any bad results. No molestation by the guerrillas was anticipated, but Mr. North provided two cars crowded with armed men, just the same. So the express went out. Soon it was speeding over the rails at a good rate, and the mountains of Deep Pass began to loom up in the distance. Sam kept a good watch of the track ahead, with his hand constantly upon the lever. The express had not been scheduled to stop anywhere except at Deep Pass, so the small stations were passed at a flying gait. Crossings were whistled, and switches traversed and then there came a long stretch of open country.

Suddenly Sam exclaimed:

"Look ahead over yonder hill, Bill. Is not that smoke?"

The stoker did as directed. He did not reply for some moments. Then he put his head in at the cab-window and said:

"Just as sure as you're alive, Sam, it is smoke, and—"

"What?"

"It don't look like a forest fire."

"No."

"It comes from the region just over Pinnacle Hill, and right where the bridge crosses Swift River."

The two men looked at each other. Then Sam took down a rifle from its hooks in the cab and examined the breech. Bill did the same. It was plain that the same thought was in the mind of each, and this was that the guerrillas were on hand and had fired the bridge. In that case there would, no doubt, be hot work. Sam opened the throttle wide and let the locomotive out. He had no thought of turning back on account of the danger. Rather, he thought of reaching the bridge if possible in time to save it. On sped the train with terrific speed. Every moment Pinnacle Hill drew nearer, the column of smoke increased in volume.

There was a long curve where the railroad wound around Pinnacle Hill, and then the bridge

would be in sight. Both Sam and Bill hung far out of the cab-windows as they approached this curve. Swiftly it was made. Sam partly closed the throttle and applied the air-brakes to steady the engine. Then the startling scene came in view. Their surmises had proved correct. One end of the bridge had been fired, and a great gang of the guerrillas were in plain view.

"Heigho! We're in for it!" cried Bill Clemmons. Sam opened the whistle-valve and let out a series of unearthly shrieks. Then he began to hold the train down for a stop. The bridge-burners were evidently astounded at sight of the train. They seemed alarmed, and scattered to the cover of rocks by the track. At the same moment a rattling volley from the guerrillas broke the windows in the cab.

CHAPTER XVII.—Major Vincent Occupies the Town.

But neither Sam nor Bill was hurt. They had sunk down upon the floor of the cab and escaped the bullets. A lively battle was almost instantly in progress. The armed guard in the cars opened fire. In a few moments they had made matters too hot for the guerrillas upon the hillsides.

Then, having driven them back, they piled out of the cars in a body. Half of them pursued the bridge-burners, while the others began to take measures to save the bridge.

This, it quickly became evident, was no easy job. The flames had gained considerable headway on the first span. However, the bridge was an iron trestle, and there was not much woodwork about it to burn. Men were lined down to the river-bank with buckets. These were passed up rapidly, filled with water, and step by step the flames were fought. Of course, quite a number of the timbers were burned out. Fortunately the trusses were of iron and the bridge held together well. For two hours the fire was fought and finally put out altogether. But some of the timbers were gone, and it did not look possible for the train to cross. Sam's ingenuity came to the rescue. He caused the rails to be relaid on the iron beams, and clinched them with firm rivets and plates, the train crossed over the first span carefully and went on over the bridge.

Part of the guard were left there with a telegraphic instrument to call for assistance in case of need. Then the train went on its way to Clear Lake. Sam's spirits were high as the train rushed on, and quick time was made. The affair served much to restore the confidence of the people of Clear Lake. The guerrilla peril did not seem so menacing and formidable now. Sam's popularity increased tenfold.

"That young engineer is a brick!" was the sentiment expressed. "He has got lots of pluck and is not easily downed."

But thrilling experiences were close at hand for Sam Wells and the entire population at Clear Lake. That very night, after the affair at the bridge, when the town was wrapped in slumber most profound, people were aroused by loud yells and the crack of firearms. Sam Wells was one of the first to reach the scene of the excitement. This was about the town jail. A guard of Confederate soldiers had there been posted. In the jail were several prisoners awaiting court-mar-

tial, and among them was Reginald Vane. Suddenly up to the yard gate there dashed a masked rider. He made salute to the guard, and cried: "If you value your life, you'll surrender and open those gates. There's a man in there we want, and if we can get him we will do no one any harm."

The guard leveled his musket and cried:

"Who are you!"

"That is nothing to you. We want your surrender."

"Well, you won't get it!" cried the plucky guard. "If you're a condemned Yankee bluecoat, you'll have a good fight getting into the place."

"We are loyal members of the Confederacy!" cried the rider. "There is a man in that jail who is innocently convicted. We want him!"

"Who is he?"

"Reginald Vane."

"Well, you won't get him. It is Col. Crossley's orders to guard him well."

"Corporal of the guard!" shouted the sentry, giving the alarm.

But down out of the gloom came a swarm of armed men. In less time than it takes to tell it the guard was overpowered and the jail gates forced. Into the jail burst the invaders. There was a quick, sharp fight. The rattle of musketry aroused the town. Down to Col. Crossley's headquarters the report of the attack went. In a jiffy a body of cavalry responded. They came dashing through the midnight streets at break-neck speed. But they came too late. The fox had been there and carried away his prize. Reginald Vane's rescue had been accomplished. And in the most daring manner possible. Who had done it? Col. Crossley arrived on the scene, furious at the result. He swore roundly, soldier fashion, and cried:

"It is the work of that villain, Bill Hurd. He claims to be an ally of our cause, but he is in reality an outlaw. I will see to his case at once."

Sam Wells was on the scene and had witnessed part of the affray. But he was powerless to act. The next day, when the daring deed of Hurd was published far and wide, public sentiment ran high. There were severe threats to pursue Hurd and lynch him. But the end was not yet. Thrilling reports began to pervade the town. There were in effect that Major Vincent had received reinforcements, and that hard fighting was going on twelve miles below. It was also rumored that the Union officer intended to occupy the town. Col. Crossley had deemed it prudent and strategic to retire. Under ordinary circumstances Mr. North would have been greatly worried over this. But his knowledge of Major Vincent and his methods of fairness removed any apprehension of this sort.

He felt sure that his property would be as fully protected under Vincent's regime as under Crossley's. He was a loyal Southerner, yet not a partisan, and did not see the necessity of personally resisting the Yankee foe. As gracefully as possible Col. Crossley withdrew his troops from the town. The rabid slaveholders and planters who believed in resisting the Yankee to the last could not understand the colonel's strategic theory. They were very angry, and denounced him vigorously. An indignation meeting was held, and many of the hotheaded ones resolved to make a stand against the Union troops. But when the solid columns of boys in blue marched into the

town to the music of "Hail Columbia" the mob dispersed like chaff before the wind. Major Vincent formally took possession of the town, and announced that for a few days at least, as it was the eve of a battle, he would declare martial law. It rankled the partisans not a little to know that they were subservient to Yankee rule, but no serious outbreak was made, and for a few days the town was as quiet and peaceful under Yankee rule as under the Confederate regime. But thrilling incidents were close at hand.

CHAPTER XVIII.—The Great Battle.

Major Vincent established his headquarters in the house formerly occupied by Col. Crossley. There was much to do, and the gallant officer was kept busy night and day. The Confederates had strongly intrenched themselves at Deep Gap, and sent out scouting and skirmishing parties to harass the Union line. Gradually, but surely, the two armies were getting into position for a battle. That this could not long be averted every one agreed. There was prevalent much excitement and thrilling anticipation. Among Major Vincent's callers was Shore Line Sam. The Union officer met Sam with a warm welcome.

"I have long been desirous of seeing you, Sam," he said, warmly.

"Indeed," replied the young engineer.

"I want to have another talk with you. Come into my private room."

Sam followed the major's lead. The room they entered was occupied with chairs and a table, upon which were spread maps and plans. Every foot of the country around was marked upon these maps, and the major knew all the available positions and how to turn them in case of a battle. He was a shrewd officer and a good manager was Major Vincent. The major sat down upon a camp-stool and Sam took another. Then the officer took a document from his bosom and held it in his hand.

"Since my last talk with you, Sam," he said, "I have become deeply interested in you. Pardon me, but I have come almost to regard you as my own son."

Sam for a moment was at a loss what reply to make. Finally he said:

"That is probably owing to the impression you received upon discovering the similarity of our birth-marks."

"That is it exactly," replied the major. "And now I have a proposition to make to you."

The major cleared his throat.

"I told you the story of my life the other day. You cannot know how dear to me has been the hope that some day I shall find my lost boy."

"I hope you may," said Sam, warmly.

The major shook his head.

"No," he said, sadly, "I have given it all up. He is dead. I am sure of that, and there is no one else in the world who could so well fill his place as you."

Major Vincent grasped Sam's hand and there was a strange, yearning light in his eyes as he continued:

"Sam, when my wife died and my boy was stolen away, I had not a chick or a child left to me. I am to-day without an heir. I am a man of much wealth. One million dollars are safely invested in New York City real estate. I am rich.

But I have no one to leave it to. I have thought of leaving it to charity——"

"But you are not going to die!" cried Sam, with horror.

"I do not know. I have had a strange presentiment. I am going into battle. I shall strive for victory, and if to gain it I lay my life down in my country's cause, then I shall not feel that it has been in vain."

The major drew a deep breath, and picking up his sword belt, buckled it on. Then he placed the document in Sam's hand.

"Sam," he said, "I want you to keep this."

"What is it?"

"It is a deed to all my property made out to you."

"But," gasped Sam, "you are rash. I cannot take it——"

"Nor need you, unless I fall in battle. If I die, then I would rather it would go to you, for I have no heirs. You will not refuse me?"

The major made his strange request so earnestly and so firmly that Sam could not refuse. He placed the document in his bosom. Before he could speak an orderly entered the tent excitedly.

"Major Vincent," he cried, "the battle is on! Colonel Houston holds the right and the enemy have attacked him. Our centre is threatened, and I think that you are wanted to the front."

"Bring up my best horse," cried the major, in clarion tones. "Order out the light battery! Seize a locomotive and twenty cars and put them aboard! Lively!"

Away went the orderly. The clash of arms was heard. Major Vincent went flying down through the streets of the town a few minutes later with his staff. Sam Wells waited for no more. He was at the depot long before the regular troop. He burst in upon Mr. North.

"Mr. North," he cried, "Major Vincent wants a locomotive and twenty cars! Shall we let him have them?"

The railroad magnate sprang up.

"The battle is on?" he asked. "Then we will be compelled to grant his request, for they would be seized. Yes, Sam, order them out."

Away went Sam to the round-house. The brave stoker was ready for the occasion, and in a jiffy the train was made up and run down to the depot just as the battery appeared. The guns and caissons were loaded upon the flat-cars forward, and the troops were placed in the rear. The word to start was given, and Sam opened the throttle. Away went the train like a thing of life. Never had any on board ridden so fast before. On and on, and now the distant roar of battle was heard. The ground shook with the boom of artillery. Now a curve was rounded, and the battlefield came in view. It was a scene which baffled description. Smoke and flying columns of men were seen, the battle being at its height. Shot and shell were flying, and Sam and Bill partook of the excitement of the moment. The train was brought to a stand right in the midst of the battlefield, and the troops were unloading, when a huge shell fell directly into the tender of the locomotive, and was upon the point of bursting.

CHAPTER XIX.—Bad News.

The shell dropped not ten feet from Sam—right in the coal of the tender. The fuse was sputter-

ing, and should it burst, both Sam and Bill would undoubtedly be blown to pieces.

Then Sam Wells made action. He saw that it was not impossible for him to save the day. But to do so required risk and quick movement. Sam did not lack either quality. Without another second's hesitation he sprang forward, bent down over the shell, and with his fingers deliberately pinched out the spark at the end of the fuse. He arose, holding the fuse in his fingers, but his face was white as chalk. It had been a tremendous strain upon his nervous system. Bill Clemmens was by his side, and cried excitedly:

"Hooray! You saved us that time. Sam Wells. By gosh, but I thought our time had surely come!"

"It was a close call," admitted Sam. "But the danger is averted, if another don't come in its place."

"I'm willing to get out of here."

"So am I."

At that moment a cannon-ball took off a corner of the cab-roof. But the Union artilleryists had now got their cannon unloaded, and were beginning to return the fire. Almost instantly the current of battle was carried to another point and the railroad was deserted. For the time the locomotive was out of range. This was not a matter of regret to either Sam or Bill.

"Whew!" exclaimed the stoker, with a shrug of his shoulders. "That's the first time I was ever on a battlefield, an' I'm about of a mind that I'd never make a sojer—no, sir, never!"

"You'd rather fire on a locomotive?" laughed Sam.

"You bet."

"Well, I don't know as I blame you. But we have faced death right here in the locomotive cab about as often as those chaps out there in blue uniform."

"You're right, mate!" cried Bill. "I can call to mind many a time."

"Of course you can."

"But I say, how long are we to stay here?"

"Until we get orders," replied Sam.

These came quick enough. At this moment an orderly came riding up and touched his cap.

"Are you Sam Wells?" he asked.

"I am," replied Sam, from the window of the cab.

"I bring orders from Major Vincent to return at once to Clear Lake, and bring down a platoon of men there. Go as quickly as you can."

"Report to Major Vincent that I have gone," replied Sam.

The orderly dashed away. Sam reversed the lever and started the train on its backward run to Clear Lake. From what could be seen of the battle as they left, it seemed to Sam as if the Union troops were getting a little the worst of it. The young Northerner's heart was, of course, with the blue. Therefore, he murmured:

"Heaven help Major Vincent and his brave men today."

Bill Clemmens heard him. The rough stoker turned about.

"Sam Wells," he said, "you are a Yank at heart, aren't you?"

"Well, I am in sympathy somewhat with the North," replied Sam.

"And still you're loyal to a Southern employer."

"So long as my duty by him does not assume any political or decisive aspect," replied Sam. "In

the duties of my position as engineer, Mr. North, although a Southern man, has not a truer employe."

Big Bill held out his hand.

"Put it thar, Sam!" he cried. "I like yer spirit. Ye don't hedge, but ye come out flat-footed. Of course I'm a Southerner, but I have never been in sympathy with this fight, anyway."

The train was flying rapidly over the rails in the direction of Clear Lake. Sam held a steady hand at the throttle. Suddenly Bill Clemmens, who was in the cab-window, cried:

"Look over yonder, Sam. What d'ye reckon that means?"

Sam gazed in the direction of an open plain not far from the railroad track. There was a wood and a rail-fence in the background. Over the rail-fence a great number of Union soldiers were climbing. They appeared to be in great disorder, and seemingly in full retreat. Sam was completely at a loss to understand the meaning of it. Certainly they were miles from the battlefield. It could not be that they had come from there. Rather looked as if they had come from the town of Clear Lake, which was but a few miles distant.

"What's up?" cried Sam, in surprise. "Do you understand it, Bill?"

"I'll be blowed if I can!" sputtered the excited stoker. "Somethin's wrong somewhar. The sojers came from Clear Lake."

"Upon my word it looks that way."

"How would it do to stop and ask them?"

"No time," replied Sam, as he opened the throttle wider. The train fairly flew over the rails.

Every moment now they were nearing Clear Lake. But suddenly Bill Clemmens cried:

"On my word, Sam, can you see yonder cloud of smoke?"

Sam did see it. From the direction of Clear Lake a mighty volume of smoke was rising heavenward. It looked as if the whole town might be in flames at that moment. Bill Clemmens and the young engineer exchanged glances.

"Upon my word!" gasped Bill. "I fear the worst has come, Sam!"

But the young engineer was puzzled. How could it be that the enemy should have attacked Clear Lake when their entire force was supposed to be concentrated in the battle at the Gap? Sam could not understand it. But an explanation quickly came. The train was nearing a small station just on the outskirts of Clear Lake. It was a flag station, and now the engineer saw a man bareheaded, standing in the middle of the track and excitedly waving a flag. Of course, Shore Line Sam could not disregard the signal. There might be danger ahead. The motives of the stopper of the train might be good or not. This was not to be easily determined; so there was no other way but to stop. Sam closed the throttle and set the air-brakes. The train slowed up and began to stop. Then a wild cry burst from Bill Clemmens' lips:

"Thunder an' guns!" he cried. "I'm a liar, Sam, if it ain't Mr. North himself."

other than Mandeville North. The reflection was a mighty shock as well as surprise to Sam. What did it mean? What had happened? These questions flashed through his mind. Certainly something was wrong. Then the train came to a stop and Mr. North ran along and climbed into the cab. His manner was terribly excited, and for a moment he could not speak, sinking down upon the floor of the cab.

"Mr. North," gasped Sam, "for heaven's sake, what has happened?"

"Oh, it's awful!" groaned the railroad magnate. "Oh, that this day should have come. Oh, the villainy of that wretch, Reginald Vane!"

"Reginald Vane!" exclaimed Sam, with pallid set features. "What has he done? Tell me all, Mr. North!"

"Oh, my child—my darling Eunice!" moaned the stricken man. "The villain has stolen her away. It is awful!"

A terrible cry broke from Sam's lips. His features became rigid and set, and his eyes burned with a terrible light.

"Stolen Eunice away!" he repeated harshly. "Do you mean that?"

"I do."

"But—how was it done?"

"By force. You see, Major Vincent had withdrawn all but a small squad of his men. This left the town defenseless. Bill Hurd and his guerrillas took advantage of the fact to descend upon it."

"My soul!" groaned Sam. "Go on!"

"They quickly dispersed the Union guard and looted the town. Many large buildings have been burned. Vane and a party of the wretches surrounded my house and, seizing Eunice, carried her boldly away. Oh, heaven, it is awful! I barely escaped with my life."

The despair and agony of the father was pitiable to witness. Sam and Bill were prone to acknowledge this. But the young engineer's whole spirit was aroused.

"Hear me, heaven!" he cried, raising his right hand. "Now I will swear to trail Reginald Vane to the end, and if harm has come to the girl I love, I will avenge her. This is my oath!"

"Heaven bless you, my boy!" he cried. "And may heaven help us to succeed."

"Are the guerrillas yet in possession of the town?" asked Sam.

"They are."

Sam's mind was quickly made up. It was useless to run down to Clear Lake now. The engine and its passengers would be seized by the guerrillas, and this was a contretemps to be avoided.

Sam thought of Major Vincent.

"I will go to him," he reflected. "He must give me enough men to hunt down these lawless villains, and they shall be exterminated."

Mr. North agreed with this plan, and Sam started the train back to the battlefield. On the way he picked up the retreating soldiers driven from Clear Lake by the guerrillas. Thus, in a measure, he had fulfilled the command given him by Major Vincent. The train now went on toward Black Gap. The thunder of the artillery could be plainly heard. But as the battlefield came in sight it could be seen that the position of the two armies had changed. Major Vincent's men now had entire possession of the railroad track.

CHAPTER XX.—A Villain's Work.

There was no mistaking the fact. The bare-headed, disheveled and pallid man who stood in the centre of the track waving the flag was no

The Confederates had been driven from their position on the spur of the mountain, and altogether it looked like a Union victory. Sam and Mr. North now left the train to go in quest of Major Vincent.

"I'll look after the engine," Bill Clemmens declared. "It'll be here all safe when ye come back."

Thus assured, Sam set out for Major Vincent's headquarters. The battle for the day was practically over. Darkness was settling down, and the two armies were content to rest upon their arms until another day. Sam and Mr. North had no trouble in finding their way to Major Vincent. That officer was furious when he heard of the depredations of the guerrillas in Clear Lake.

"This is terrible!" he cried. "Something surely must be done to wipe out the rascals. But what can we do?"

"If you will give me command of a force large enough," said Sam resolutely, "I will undertake to wipe them out."

"I will gladly do that," cried the major eagerly. "But I dare not do it tonight."

"May I ask why?"

"Certainly. There would be too much risk just now in sending out a troop, while we hardly know the position of our foes. They might run into the enemy's lines, and be captured before they knew what they were about."

Sam was impatient.

"You can understand how important it is that we go as soon as possible to the rescue of Miss North, major," he said.

"I do, but it would be folly to make a false step now. It would be likely to plunge us into defeat."

"I will admit that your judgment is better than mine," said Sam, "but when will we be able to start?"

"Early in the morning."

"Can nothing be done in the meanwhile?"

"Yes. I will send scouts up to Clear Lake, and they will report to me tomorrow the course taken by the guerrillas. We can then in some way intercept them."

All were bound to acknowledge the wisdom of this move. It was in order, therefore, to wait until dawn.

"How has the battle gone today, major?" asked Mr. North.

"Rather against your people," replied the Union officer, with a smile. "Unless they change their position before another day I fear we shall win a complete victory."

"Ah, me!" sighed the railroad magnate. "I long for the ending of this cruel strife."

"If all your people felt that way I think it would soon be ended," said the major.

"My people are battling for what they believe to be their rights," replied Mr. North, with some asperity.

"Undoubtedly; but theirs is a delusion. But we will not discuss the subject. While you are not a loyal subject of the Union you are a non-combatant, and I will aid you in the rescue of your daughter."

"You will have the reward due an act of humanity," said Mr. North warmly.

"I do not mean to be inhuman," said the major, "although war has a hardening influence upon a man."

The discussion ended here. Major Vincent as-

signed quarters in a tent to his visitors. But that was a sleepless night for both. It was a welcome sight to see the light of dawn breaking in the east. But with daylight there came a great surprise. Colonel Crossley's brigade had the night before occupied a position just opposite the Union forces. With daylight, it was seen that he had gone. Bag and baggage, guns and all, had been transported in the night. The camp-fire had been left burning to deceive the Yankees. It was, however, not altogether a surprise to Major Vincent.

"I had expected a change of base," he said, "but it seems as if the rascals had decamped altogether."

This was true. A Confederate captured and brought into camp declared that Crossley had been ordered to join Hill's forces at Atlanta.

"Well," said Major Vincent, "that ends fighting for this section. You may go ahead with your railroad business again, Mr. North."

"But for the guerrillas?" said the magnate.

"We will attend to them," said Major Vincent determinedly.

CHAPTER XXI.—Sam Makes a Bold Move.

The major meant every word that he uttered. He was now free to deal with the guerrillas, and there was little doubt but that he would do so. At this juncture the scouts he had sent out the night before began to come in. They brought reports that the guerrillas had evacuated Clear Lake. As near as could be learned they were making their way over the Swift River due east of Black Gap. It was evidently their intention to break for the Tennessee line and seek refuge beyond the reach of the Union forces. Major Vincent drew a sheet of paper from his portfolio and drew a rough chart.

"You will see their course quite plainly by this," he declared. "Now, there is a way to cut them. Take one thousand men under Captain Briggs aboard your train and make a quick run for the Swift River Pass. There cut in the mountains and ambush them in the Pass."

Sam saw at a glance that the major had outlined a grand plan of action. Properly carried out it would be a big success. Captain Briggs and his regiment were called out, and Sam went down to see Bill Clemmens. He found the stoker luckily guarding the train.

"Waal, you kin bet I'm all ready," replied Bill, in response to Sam's query. "Hadn't I better run down to the camp?"

"Yes," replied Sam. "The men will be there all ready for you."

The stoker ran the engine down the track a ways, and the troops embarked on the train. Then Sam took the throttle and sent the train flying on its way to Black Gap. A terrific rate of speed was maintained until Swift River Bridge was sighted. And here the train came to a halt. The troops disembarked. The Swift River came down through a mighty gorge. Just beyond this and over the mountain wall was the Pass. It was expected that the guerrillas would pass through this on their way out of the country. It was an admirable place for an ambush, and if the guerrillas should meet the troops here they could be easily corralled and forced to surrender.

Accordingly Captain Briggs deployed his men

with that purpose in view. But in some manner the wily Hurd had learned of the ambush and had refused to enter the defile. Instead, he made a stand just beyond, and a feint to draw the foe out to the attack. As the guerrillas far outnumbered the Federal troops and would have the advantage of position, Captain Briggs hesitated about doing this. Instead, a daring maneuver was conceived, which it was believed would turn the flank of the guerrillas and force them into the trap prepared for them. Three hundred men scaled the mountain wall and came down upon the opposite side with the intention of attacking the guerrillas in the rear. But in the meanwhile darkness came on.

Sam all this while had remained practically idle. It was a galling reflection to him that not two miles away, a captive, was his beloved Eunice. It fired him with desperation and a resolve to make a venturesome move. Accordingly, without informing anyone of the fact, he conceived a plan for her rescue. Near the hour of midnight he left the camp, and stealing past the guard, he struck out up the gorge. Creeping along cautiously, in time he came in sight of the lights of the guerrilla camp. His position now was one of peril and of a precarious sort. It was his purpose to enter the guerrilla camp if possible. But guards were posted along at intervals, making a perfect picket line.

Sam could not see how he was to dodge them. But he finally selected a spot near a thick copse. Creeping up quite near the picket he watched for a chance. So skillful was he in the attempt that he actually succeeded in getting within twenty feet of the picket without his presence being discovered. But the question was now how to get past the sentinel. His beat was possibly forty feet in length. Sam studied the situation quite a while and then made a daring plan. Thick woods were beyond. If he could gain them he believed that he could elude any quest for him. He waited until the picket's back was turned and he started to pace the rest of his beat. Then quick as a flash he glided from his covert. He succeeded even better than he had expected that he would.

His footsteps were so noiseless, and his action so quick, that he actually got past the guard and into the woods beyond. It was a rare streak of luck and Sam felt that half the battle was won. With elated feelings he now crept boldly toward the guerrilla camp. It was a spot close against the mountain wall, and several huge fires illuminated the vicinity. Possibly two thousand men of the very roughest type were here encamped. It was a motley crew, and Sam was deeply impressed as he gazed upon them. All classes and conditions of men had leagued themselves with the guerrillas. Truly they were a lawless crew. The most of them lay around in various attitudes of ease, engaged in gambling, smoking or telling stories. Sam did not see anything of Hurd or Vane.

But he saw a white tent pitched up against the mountain wall. His heart thrilled, for he fancied that it contained the girl captive. He now began to study some plan for reaching this tent. This was not easy at present. But an hour later matters quieted down and the guerrillas for the greater part rolled themselves up in their blankets and went to sleep. Now or never, thought the young engineer. He began to make his way in the

shadows toward the tent. The guard at the door sat upon a log. To Sam's delight he saw that sleep had overmastered him. This enabled him to actually reach the tent. He bent down and lifted the flap gently. There was a little stifled cry and then Sam was in the tent.

"Sh! Easy, Eunice! There is great danger. But I have come to save you."

CHAPTER XXII.—A Brave Rescue.

Sam Wells was the happiest man on earth at that moment as he clasped the form of Eunice in his arms. The young girl was quite distraught with the horror of her position. But this sudden appearance of Sam caused her spirits to revive. She clung to him passionately.

"Oh, Sam!" she whispered, "how did you succeed in getting here? Only think of the awful danger!"

"Yes, we must be very careful," said the young engineer. "Fortunately, I found the guard asleep at the door."

"Oh, do you really think you can take me from here?"

"I'll do it or die!"

She clung close to him.

"What of my father?" she asked, with painful earnestness. "Tell me, is he safe? I feared that the villains would do him harm."

"He is safe in the Union lines," said Sam.

"Ah, then our people——"

"Yes, they have suffered defeat."

Her eyes flashed, her bosom swelled, and for a moment her Southern spirit was fired. Sam had never seen her look so lovely before in his life.

"But our men will win in the end," she said resolutely. "The South will never yield to the North."

Sam smiled and made reply:

"There, there! Whichever side wins, it must not create hard feelings between us. I do not blame you for your loyal adherence to your country's cause. You cannot blame me for my sympathy with the North. But we are noncombatants, and, furthermore, as we love each other, let us leave the unholy strife to those who were so unwise as to bring it about."

"If they are all like you," she cried, flinging her arms about him. "I could never fight against them."

"Whatever our sympathies in this awful strife," said Sam gravely, "let us promise each other never to let that barrier stand between us and our love."

"I will promise."

So enwrapped in each other had the two lovers been that they almost forgot their perilous position. Sam was the first to think of it, and he suddenly asked:

"But—of course, it was Vane's work in bringing you here?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Is he in the camp now?"

"He is."

Then a cry of agony was half upon her lips.

"Oh, Sam, just think of the awful danger. If they should find you here they would kill you."

"But they will never do that," said Sam resolutely. "I am going to leave this minute, and I am going to take you with me!"

"Oh, can you do that?"

"I can, and will, or death will overtake me."

"If death must come, let it come to us both," she said.

Her courage was now aroused. The Southern fire of her temperament, which engenders a lion's bravery, was aflame. Sam crept to the flap of the tent and raised it. The fires of the encampment lay but a few yards away. The guard yet slept. A few guerrillas were yet lounging about a camp-fire near. In the rear was the high mountain wall. There were deep shadows along the mountain wall, and it seemed the best and safest method of escape. Indeed the path to escape seemed easy. He crept back into the tent and whispered:

"Are you ready?"

"Yes," replied Eunice.

With her arm in his they glided from the tent. In the shadows they crept along cautiously toward the defile. One step had been taken toward freedom. But the greatest danger of all was yet before them. There was yet the picket line to pass. In the meantime, should their escape be discovered, it was likely that the pickets would be notified and the possibility of passing them lessened. But Sam would not think of defeat. He was determined to win at all hazards. Down into the gorge they crept. They soon entered the copse in which was the picket whom Sam had so cleverly passed in coming in. The fellow was pacing his beat with regular tread. Sam now withdrew Eunice's arm from his.

"I will have to leave you for a brief moment," he whispered, "but do not fear. I will hope to return soon."

The young engineer then glided away into the darkness. He crept cautiously down to the picket line. He could see the sentinel easily in the semi-gloom. He waited until the picket faced about to continue his beat. Then Sam made a spring forward. The picket heard him coming and partly turned. Had Sam been less quick that would have been his last moment upon earth. As it was the bullet from the rifle of the guard grazed his head. Sam's hands clutched the bayonet, turned it aside, and with a dexterous movement he wrenched the gun from the fellow's hands.

"Surrender, or I'll kill you!" exclaimed the young engineer.

"I surrender!" howled the fellow, who seemed to think that the Union forces had made a night attack.

Sam Wells knew that all depended upon the quickest kind of action. He tore the fellow's belt loose and tied his hands behind him. Then he secured his ankles with the strap from his gun. All this had taken time. The shot he knew would be sure to bring a relief guard. Sam called Eunice. In a moment the young girl was by his side. Sam drew her arm in his, and cried:

"Now for liberty!"

Down the gorge they ran as fast as Eunice's strength would allow. They heard the guard behind them. There were a large number of the foe cutting him off. The only move was, therefore, to skirt the opposite side of the mountain wall.

CHAPTER XXIII.—The Villains Fall Out.

The foe came on behind in hot pursuit. Had he been alone Sam could easily have outfooted them. The whole region seemed alive with them.

But he fairly carried Eunice along, the while muttering between his teeth:

"We will give them a good race. If only I could reach camp."

He heard the sounds of firing behind far down the opposite gulch, and concluded that the guerrillas had run across Mr. North and his party. That was fully two miles below. Eunice's strength held out amazingly. Sam was astonished at her endurance. The long, weary run around the wall of the mountain was made, however, and in the gloom Sam saw the railroad track below. There was also a section-hand's cabin and tool-house there. Sam rushed down to it, and throwing his weight against the door burst it in. There was the hand-car all ready to be run out upon the rails. Sam quickly put his shoulder to it. He was strong and supple and soon had run the car out. By dint of heavy lifting he got it upon the rails.

"Now or never!" he cried, lifting Eunice into the box.

Then he sprang to the crank. Just at that moment a number of mounted guerrillas dashed out upon the level land on the other side of the track. They raised a loud yell and started for the fugitives. Sam started the car upon the steep downgrade. The guerrillas did not dare to fire on account of the danger of hitting Eunice, whom, of course, they knew they were to capture alive. It was a mad, wild race. Pen cannot adequately describe it. Down the mighty grade fled the hand-car with terrific speed. Behind came the guerrillas, spurring their horses to the utmost. Once they were so near that they could nearly touch the car. At their head Sam saw that Bill Hurd rode. The young engineer knew what the track was ahead. He knew that half a mile beyond was a narrow cut. Halfway through this the track was laid over a waterway. He did not believe the guerrillas could pass this without mishap. A few moments later the hand-car entered the cut. The guerrillas followed, not seeing the waterway and the treacherous space between the sleepers.

They were obliged to take to the railroad track here, but when they struck the waterway the horses in advance went down, throwing their riders, and those in the rear piled on top of them. The entire cavalcade were piled up in a heap in the cut. It was a terrible experience for the guerrillas. Piled up in that inextricable heap pursuit was ended. Hurd had been in advance of his men, and had been thrown into the gravel bank of the cut, escaping unhurt. Sam and the hand-car went on down the track and the escape was made perfect. All that the surviving guerrillas could do was to pull themselves together and wholly abandon the chase.

"Well, it's a pretty state of affairs," snapped Vane. "When one of the enemy can creep into your camp, find all your men asleep and carry off a prisoner bodily."

"Perhaps you could have done better than I have!" snapped Hurd.

"Yes, I think I could!"

"Then, by thunder, you lie!"

Vane's face was swollen with rage. The two erstwhile partners in crime faced each other.

"If you're a coward you'll retract what you said," gritted Vane. "If not, you'll stand your ground!"

"I never retract!" retorted the guerrilla chief,

drawing his sword; "there is no time better than the present. No man can insult me and live!"

The blades of their swords crossed. Hurd was a desperate and reckless fighter. A number of his men stood by, and he could have called them to his assistance. But his honor forbade this. Nor did they dare to interfere. Vane was a cunning villain. He had no courage, but he was an expert swordsman. By a side stroke he gashed his adversary's wrist. This weakened Hurd's arm, and before he had recovered Vane made a desperate rush and thrust his sword into his side. The guerrilla chief, with a terrible groan, fell to the ground, the blood pouring from his wound. A number of his followers sprang to his side. The wounded guerrilla chief had just strength enough left to shake his sword at Vane and cry:

"This is not the end. My time will come. I hate you, Reginald Vane!"

Vane laughed with scornful triumph. He saw threatening glances bestowed upon him by the followers of Hurd. Discretion caused him to mount his horse and dash away. The guerrilla chief was desperately wounded. The sounds of conflict down the gorge drew nearer. It began to look as if the Union troops were getting the upper hand.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Which Is the End.

It was true that the guerrillas were getting the worst of the conflict in the gorge. Captain Briggs' men had the advantage of position now, and pressed forward with a good show of victory. The star of Hurd, the guerrilla, was no more in the ascendant. Doom and defeat hung over him. With wild cheers, on came the victors. The guerrillas now began as orderly a retreat as possible. But a new disaster was upon them. Suddenly a terrifying report came from the rear. A detachment of the Union forces under Major Vincent had been sent to cut off the enemy in the rear, as the reader will remember.

These had now come up. The guerrillas were practically in a neat trap. Their leader lay mortally wounded in his tent. That day was to see Bill Hurd and his gang wiped from existence forever. The Union troops from both sides moving in, surrounded the guerrillas, and they were compelled to throw down their arms. The victorious Union troops marched into camp with Major Vincent at their head. Sam, Mr. North and Eunice were with them, and met Major Vincent as he came in. It was a pleasant meeting, and Mr. North said:

"Major Vincent, though your cause is against ours, I am happy to give you credit for accomplishing what our troops could not; that is, the wiping out of this curse of Clear Lake, the guerrillas under Bill Hurd."

"Thank you," replied the major gallantly. "We mean the people of this region no harm whatever. We are fighting the Confederate army and not the Southern people. Some day you will see that Uncle Sam's cause is a righteous one."

"If the people of the South have made a mistake," said Mr. North, "I will be the foremost to make all the reparation within my power."

This was very graceful and created good feelings. But at this moment a private touched the major's arm.

"If you please, major," he said, "the guerrilla,

Bill Hurd, is dying, and wants to speak with you."

Then the major turned to Sam and beckoned him to follow him. Together they entered the tent. Hurd lay upon a cot. His face was ghastly white and his eyes glazed. He held out his hand to the major.

"Vincent, you know me?"

"Yes, Bill Hurd," said the Union officer; "I have reason to know you."

The guerrilla chief smiled bitterly.

"Vincent," he said, "I don't ask you to forgive me, for that I know to be too much to ask; but I give you back the treasure I stole from you."

"What! Do you mean to say that Sam is really my lost baby boy?"

"Yes," replied the guerrilla chief feebly, "that is the truth. Sam Wells is your boy. I placed him with a young widow in New Haven by the name of Wells, who raised him from an infant. Sam has always believed her his real mother. Now, Major Vincent, pray for my soul!"

Vincent and Sam turned to each other.

"Father!"

"My boy!"

And now draws our story to its end. We have seen our hero restored to his rights, and villainy punished. It was joyful news to all to learn that Sam had found his father, and that his past was cleared up. Clear Lake once more was occupied by Union soldiers. But only for a time. The tide of war was turning toward Savannah. Colonel Crossley's regiment had gone in the van of Sherman's triumphant march to the sea, and Major Vincent was recalled to the main branch of the army. The war was over, so far as Clear Lake was concerned. Soon the railroad was once more in profitable operation.

Its enemies were gone forever. News came of the fate of Reginald Vane. The villain had been arrested by Crossley and shot as a traitor. Sam continued as engineer until the close of the war. Then he went North to join his father. But before two years had passed he returned to claim Eunice North as a bride. Today he is a prosperous man of business.

Next week's issue will contain "THE GOLD QUEEN; OR, TWO YANKEE BOYS IN NEVER NEVER LAND."

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A LUCKY LAD

—or—

THE FORTUNE OF TOM WESLEY

By R. T. BENNETT

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XX.—(Continued)

"Found by Jack Jones on his birthday and turned loose."

That evening he took the terrapin to Jack Jones' home. Jack was now a carpenter, had married and had three children.

"Jack," said Tom, "I don't know but that I have a lucky coin for you."

Jack picked it up, and after examining it, recognized the inscription on the shell.

"Great Scott, Tom, I don't see any luck in this. I remember when I cut those letters on his back, but that was fifteen years ago, and it was not larger than a silver dollar; but how old it was then I have no idea. You can find them almost all over this county."

"Well, I didn't know, Jack, but that its coming back to you with your name on it might mean good luck; anyway, if I were you, I would keep it. They will stay in certain places for years, so I have been told."

"All right," said Jack, "I'll keep him and see if he carries any luck with him," and taking out his pocket-knife, he cut on the shell: "Found again," with date of the day on which Tom had brought it to him, and taking him out into his back yard, he dug a little hole in the ground and buried him in it.

"Tom," said Jack one day, when he met Tom, "I guess I am doomed to bad luck. My little boy found that lucky terrapin which you brought to me and cut him up with the axe."

"Well, I guess there was nothing in the way of luck in it, anyway, Jack for he was probably ten years older than you when you found him."

"Yes, that's so," assented Jack.

"But see here, Jack," said Tom, "what did you do when you found him cracked by your little boy's axe?"

"Oh, I threw him over the fence, for my little boy was disposed to carry it around and exhibit it as a curiosity, and it was one to him."

"Well, if you can find it, Jack, I would advise you to do so and bury it, for I once heard of an old Indian who buried one out in front of his wigwam for luck."

"By George," said Jack, "old man Swanson told me that very story once about that old Indian who buried a terrapin which he found dead in front of his wigwam."

"Yes," returned Tom, "he told me the story too; and furthermore, the name of the old Indian, which I have forgotten; but he said that the old chap had good luck all the rest of his life, and to keep anybody else from digging up the dead terrapin, he moved his wigwam right over the spot and slept over it, and thus good luck came

to him, for he never went out hunting without getting good game."

"That's the story," said Jack, "and hanged if I don't go and hunt for that dead terrapin, which has been dead now for three days." So he went off in a hurry to look for it.

CHAPTER XXI.—Tom's Narrow Escape from Death

A week later, when Tom met Jack again, he asked him what he had done with the dead terrapin.

"Oh, said he. 'I found it. It was almost covered with ants; but I buried it about two feet deep and laid a flat stone over it. And, by George, Tom, I'll be hanged if I haven't got faith in it, just as you have in your lucky dime, for yesterday I got a contract to build a barn for Judge Hanson, and I'll make every penny of a hundred dollars off of it.'"

"By George, old man, shake," laughed Tom, and both of them shook hands cordially and then parted.

One day Tom was out at work in his mother's garden, when Evelyn Granger came running out there and asked:

"Tom, have you got your lucky dime in your pocket?"

"Yes," said he.

"Well, please let me have it."

"All right, dear. You can have anything that is mine; but tell me why you want it to-day."

"Tom, I really don't know; but a sudden impression has come upon me that it would be best for both of us for me to carry it in my pocket all day long. I can't account for it. It has made me very nervous."

"All right. If you will be cured of your superstitious attack by the dime, take it. That means good luck itself," and he drew from his pocket the little lucky coin.

When she had it in her hand she touched it to her lips and said:

"Tom, I don't know why, but I feel greatly relieved."

Evelyn then turned and left the garden, going into the house, where, after chatting a few minutes with Mrs. Wesley, she left the house and went off with a party of girl friends who said they were going berrying.

Of course she was boarding at Mrs. Wesley's house, and it was there that the nervous impression came upon her; but she went away with the party of girls in very good humor and splendid spirits, with the dime in her possession.

Tom worked in his garden until noon, by which time he had completed the little task he had assigned himself.

Evelyn and her party of friends took lunches with them and didn't return until late in the afternoon.

Having nothing else to do, Tom made up his mind to go down to the old pond and try his luck at fishing, for he was still as fond of the sport as ever, and he wanted to test his luck without the lucky coin.

There were a few boys down there fishing, and when Tom asked them what luck they were hav-

ing, they said that they were doing very well, not having any lucky coins with them.

A little later two strangers came down to the pond, armed with fishing tackle, and one of them caught several very fine fish.

"Oh," said one of the boys, "if you had a lucky coin in your pocket, as Tom Wesley, the boy sitting over on that rock there has you could catch more fish every time you came out than you could carry home with you."

Then the men began talking with the boys and soon found out the whole story of Tom's lucky dime, and though they sat there quietly fishing and occasionally landing a fine bass, they kept an eye on Tom over on the shelving rock.

By and by, as the sun began to sink down pretty low in the west, the boys all went home, but the strangers sat there fishing some time longer, and then they began to talk about the young man with the lucky dime, and how he always caught big strings of fish, and how he had good luck ever since he found the coin. His companion suggested to him that, being down there alone, they make an attack on him and take possession of the coin, so they went over to where Tom was still fishing and got into conversation with him.

By and by one of them said something about his lucky dime, and Tom admitted that he was the owner of it, whereupon one of the men wanted to borrow it to try his luck for a half hour; but Tom said that he didn't have the dime with him, and one of them made a sudden attack on him by pushing him back on the rock, and kneeling on his chest, choked him while his comrade searched his clothes for the coin.

Tom was choked until he ceased to make any resistance.

"By George," said the other, "I guess he told the truth, for I can't find the coin in his clothes."

"Well, he has got some other money, hasn't he? If so, take it, and we'll start back to town."

"Look here," said his companion, "hanged if I don't believe he is dead. You have choked him too hard," and they began to examine him, finding that he was unconscious, and that they couldn't discover any heart beat.

"Look here," said one, "we'd better get away from here," and the two villains became so badly frightened that they hurried away, going through the woods rather than by the road.

That evening Tom didn't appear at the supper table, which was something quite unusual with him, and his two horses were standing in the stable still unfed.

Then Evelyn became alarmed and began making inquiries around as to when he was last seen.

She met one of the little boys who had seen him down at the pond fishing, and learned from him that there were two strangers down there also fishing, and again that nervous attack came upon her so she asked a couple of young men boarders and several of her girl friends to go down to the old mill-pond with her.

The girls thought that it was too far for them to walk, so Evelyn asked one of the young men to go out to the stable and hitch up Tom's rig for her. He did so, and she was so pale and nervous that Mrs. Wesley herself became alarmed.

By and by they started off, but the stars were pretty well out, and Evelyn whipped up the bays,

soon reaching the old mill-pond; but not a soul was in sight.

She leaped out of the rig and ran around to several places which she well knew were Tom's fishing spots, and soon found him lying half lifeless and pale on that shelving rock.

When she saw him she uttered a scream that brought the others to her side, and the young men took Tom's body up in their arms and conveyed him to the rig.

Evelyn ordered them to first carry him to the spring and lay him down on the grass, while she dashed the cold water over his face, until he began to show signs of returning consciousness.

It was a wonder that she didn't faint, but her nerve stood her in good stead.

Finally Tom breathed a long, lingering breath, and they knew then he was yet alive.

"Please take him up and carry him to the rig now," she pleaded, and the two young men promptly proceeded to do so.

She told one of them to drive, while she held Tom up and let him lean against her shoulder, where, by the time he reached the house, he was quite conscious.

Others of the men boarders came out and assisted in taking Tom to his room, and the family physician was summoned.

The doctor soon told them that he had been attacked and choked to unconsciousness. He applied all the necessary restoratives, and by and by Tom began to talk, and he told his story of the attack that was made on him by the two strangers demanding his lucky dime.

He said that they took him unawares, and that he was unable to make an effectual resistance; so the town marshal was sent for, and when he came Tom described his two assailants. As the marshal listened, he said he remembered seeing those two fellows himself several times during the day.

"Tom," the marshal asked, "was it true that you didn't have the lucky dime with you?"

"Yes," put in Evelyn, "for I had it in my pocket all day."

"Now Mr. Marshal," she continued, "I will pay one hundred dollars for the arrest of those villains, so go ahead and catch them if you can."

The marshal hurried out of the house and Evelyn followed him out on the piazza and told him to employ help if he needed it, and that she would pay for their services.

First the marshal hurried down to the railroad depot and asked the ticket agent if the men had bought tickets for New York or any other place from him.

The agent couldn't remember, so the marshal now had hopes that they were still in town. He hunted up some half dozen of his personal friends, told his story and offered them ten dollars each to help him catch them.

His friends started the inquiry at once. It was about midnight when they met an old Irishman, who lived down by the railroad track, and he told them that those two strangers had climbed aboard a freight train that was going down toward the city. The marshal went to the freight agent and learned from him that that particular freight train would stop at a station ten miles outside of the city.

(To be continued)

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NEW YORK, MARCH 16, 1927.

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

THE NEW FASHION

"Sky scraper" hats and gowns may be the next fashion fad. High school students have designed them to "express the spirit" of New York's lofty towers.

MILLIONS FLOCK TO AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

More than 3,445,000 persons are reported as being employed in the automobile industry directly and indirectly in the United States. Wages paid employees in motor car and truck factories in 1925 totaled over \$649,668,000.

SIXTY-TWO FOOT JUMP FOR MOTORCYCLE

During an exhibition at the Auckland Park Motordrome, in Johannesburg, South Africa, Piet Lievaert made a jump of sixty-two feet on a motorcycle. This is claimed to be a world record.

THE COST OF CRIME

Commercial crime costs the United States four billions annually; and unless curbed by Federal action, law enforcement and "high moral endeavor on the part of every citizen" will in the end destroy our civilization.

HERMIT FOUND ILL FROM STARVATION

A half-starved old man, a gardener and a vegetarian, lies seriously ill in the State Hospital on Danvers, Mass, while neighbors recalled the gossip which named him model for the tribute to boyhood by John Greenleaf Whittier that ran:

"Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan,
With thy turned up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tuncs,
With they red lip, redder still,
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace,
From my heart I give thee joy;
I was once a barefoot boy!"

Frankie Marston is the name of the gray-whiskered man whom neighbors assisted from

his lonely cottage after he had been found weak from lack of food. These neighbors recalled the room, that it was attributed to his inspiration, and that he had worked here on an estate where Whittier had lived. They recalled also that the gardener shunned meats and subsisted largely on fruits, nuts and berries.

Marston was unconscious when he reached the hospital and doctors attributed his condition to lack of food and exposure to cold.

No one knows just how old he is, but neighbors say he is well past sixty. He still carries the "cheek of tan," and, like most hermits, is reported to be comparatively well off.

He had worked on what is known as "the old Whittier estate" here until a few weeks ago as caretaker. He has been a fixture around the estate for the last half-century and in the summer he augments his gardening income with berry picking.

LAUGHS

AN EXPERIENCED SCRIBBLER

Mr. Longhair: Is the editor in?

Office Boy: Yes, sir.

Mr. Longhair: Well—er—I'll call again when he is out. I have a poem to submit to him.

KEEPING HER AT HOME

Wife: Don't you think you might manage to keep house alone for a week, while I go off on a visit?

Husband: I guess so; yes, of course.

"But won't you be lonely and miserable?"

"Not a bit."

"Hugh! Then I won't go."

TOO MUCH FOR HIM

Publisher: What's the matter? You look ill.

Book Agent: I've come to resign. Can't stand this job any longer. I don't want to be talked to death.

Eh? What happened?

"Every customer I struck today had just returned from Europe, and was slopping over with descriptions of what they had seen on the other side."

NEEDED HER DAD'S HELP

Summer Girl: Papa, I wish you'd lock up your money and pretend to fail, there's a very good reason. It needn't last more than a week or two, and there are so many failures now no one will find fault.

Father: Of all things! What—"

Summer Girl: Oh, it's all right. You see, I'm engaged to nine young men, and I've got to get rid of at least eight of them somehow.

DAYS OF CHIVALRY GONE

Wife (dreadily): Ah, me! The days of chivalry are past.

Husband: What's the matter now?

"Sir Walter laid his cloak on the ground for Queen Elizabeth to walk over, but you get mad simply because poor, dear mother sat down on your hat"

The Man With Horns

Charley Thurber is an artist friend of mine, and he has a passion for curiosities.

One night we paid a visit to a museum on the east side of New York City, and after staring at all the monstrosities in the place, we strolled homewards, along the Bowery, arm-in-arm.

My name is Richard Folger, and I am a matter-of-fact sort of fellow, being brought up in the hardware business.

"What is the greatest curiosity you ever saw, Charley?" I remarked.

"Well, I've seen the strangest specimens of humanity that ever lived, but my man with horns beats them all."

"Your man with horns. Surely, you're trying to humbug me, Charley."

"On my oath I'm not. Come home with me, and I will show you the man—at least his head and horns."

"I'll go with you. You arouse my curiosity. Who and what is the man?"

"I will tell you all I know about him—in confidence, of course. I first met the man at the Turkish bathrooms."

"What was he doing there?"

"He was an attendant there. He served me very kindly indeed. I noticed that in the heated room he wore his high felt hat on all occasions."

"To hide his horns, of course," I said.

"Yes, it was to hide his horns. I discovered that he had horns by the merest accident—his hat slipped off."

"If you are telling the truth, Charley, you've found a treasure indeed."

"He is a treasure in every way. The man is now my servant, or assistant—that is, he waits on me in the most faithful manner."

"Has he told you the history of his life? Was he born with the horns?"

"No—confound you! No animals ever are born with horns. They grow, like Topsy. Tom Webb will never speak of his past life to me. As to the horns, I never allude to them."

"He's sensitive on these points, then?"

"Extremely so. I fancy that the horns are connected with some tragic incident of his life."

"Hang me, if I wouldn't like to interview your horned friend."

"You can do so, Dick. He is not at all unsociable. Come along with me, and I will introduce you."

Charley Thurber occupied a suite of rooms in a flat on Fourth avenue.

He was a bachelor, made considerable money, and he lived well.

He was a rare good fellow, with an open, honest face, a free heart and a lavish hand.

When we entered his apartments, he touched a handbell on the table, and a small, good-natured-looking man entered the sitting-room from an inner apartment.

The man wore a high felt hat; he appeared to be about forty years of age, and, while he was most respectful in his demeanor, he did not offer to raise his hat when he entered the room.

"Some wine and cigars, please, Tom," said my host.

"All right, sir," was the response, as the man withdrew in an easy manner.

"Did you notice him, Dick?" my friend asked me.

"Is that your man with horns?" I asked.

"That is the man."

"I would like to see them."

"You will see them."

The man returned in a very short time bearing a tray with wine-glasses and cigars.

As he was opening the wine my friend remarked:

"Tom, this is a particular friend of mine—an experienced surgeon. I have no intention of hurting your feelings in any way."

"I know that, Mr. Thurber," said the man with the horns.

"I casually remarked to-night about your misfortune, Tom."

"For Heaven's sake, do not speak of it, sir. I bear it with patience and—"

"My dear friend here will not betray your secret, good Tom. In fact, he comes on a mission of kindness; that is to say, he desires to examine your deformity from a medical point of view, with the purpose of removing the deformity, if possible, without risking your life."

"Oh, would I not bless him if he would do it!" said the man with the horns, as the tears welled up in his eyes.

I was watching the man in the meantime, and his face was strangely familiar.

At that time I was about thirty-five years of age.

I could remember far into the past, but for the life of me I could not place the face before me, although I felt certain that I had seen it in other days.

Having studied medicine in my young days, before entering on an active business life, and assuming the air of one who was skilled in surgery, I took the hint from my friend's remarks, and said:

"Mr. Webb, I have performed some very peculiar operations in my time."

"The best surgeon in the world," cried Charley, giving me a sly wink. "Let him examine your head."

The man hesitated to reply.

It was evident that he had a terror of close inspection.

While looking at him, without appearing to scrutinize him closely, I noticed that he kept his hat low down on his forehead.

And then I asked myself: Was there something else to hide, besides the horns?

"Don't be afraid, Tom," continued Charley. "If there is any chance of removing those horns, the doctor here is the man to do it."

"Yes, I would like to examine them," I said, my curiosity growing deeper and deeper.

"They can never be removed," said the man with the horns, "unless after my death."

"But you will let him see and examine them? Perhaps he could cut them down."

"They have been cut down before. I'm tired of experiments on them."

The man was about to turn away, in a sulky manner, when my friend whispered something into his ear, which had the desired effect.

"To oblige you, sir, I will let him look at the horns, but only from behind the screen."

As the man turned away I noticed that his throat was muffled in a scarf.

The discovery of this fact tended to increase my desire to know more of the fellow.

When the man left the room I asked:

"Why does the man wish to exhibit behind a screen? Why does he keep his neck muffled this warm night?"

"That is another peculiarity of his. I fancy that his neck is also deformed in some way. I have never seen it."

Charley led me into an inner room, which he used as a studio.

There was a dark curtain hanging across a kind of an alcove, wherein Charley kept his unfinished pictures.

The horned man stood behind the curtain, with his head uncovered, displaying no other portion of the body.

Sure enough, there were the horns, about three inches in length, jutting out above the forehead.

"Take a close look," said Charley, handing me a magnifying glass.

I did as requested, drawing near to the head as I peered through the glass.

I was about to declare that my artist friend was playing a trick on me, with the aid of his servant, when the strong glare from the magnifying glass caused the man to wink his eyes and exclaim:

"The light is too strong for my eyes, sir."

"Then close your eyes," I retorted. "I only wish to examine the horns."

"You'll observe," said Charley, with the air of a man who was delivering a lecture, "that the horns are perfectly natural. Even the tufts of hair on the man's forehead are——"

"Hold! hold!" I cried excitedly, as I observed a peculiar mark on the man's forehead. "How came that mark?"

"You've seen enough," grumbled the man, as I heard his footsteps receding from the alcove.

Tearing the curtain down, I dashed after the man, and grabbed him by the collar, just as he was in the act of drawing the felt hat over his horned forehead.

The man wheeled suddenly around and struck me a fierce blow in the face.

The blow staggered me, while it sent stars shooting before my eyes.

Slipping away from my grasp, the fellow darted out into the other room, and he was down the stairs ere I could recover from the effects of the blow, or Charley from his astonishment at what he had witnessed.

"What in thunder does all this mean?" demanded my friend in absolute amazement.

"It seems that that scoundrel is my father's murderer. Follow me."

Seizing my hat, I rushed out of the apartments and down the stairs.

The lights had been extinguished and the hallways were quite dark.

In my haste I stumbled over an object lying in the dark hallway, and fell forward, striking my head against the hard balustrade.

When I opened my eyes again I was lying in Charley's front room, my friend was standing over me, and two policemen were bending over an object lying prostrate on the floor.

The prostrate object was the man with horns. "He's a goner," remarked the policemen.

"Serves him right," I cried.

The man with horns had a deep gash on his forehead, from which the blood was flowing freely.

The policemen had removed the scarf from his neck, in order to let him breathe more freely, and several small blue marks of a triangular shape could be perceived on the side of his throat.

These marks were identical with the one I had seen on his forehead with the aid of the magnifying-glass.

As I was staring at the man, he opened his eyes, and a shudder passed over his frame, while he groaned forth:

"'Tis all up with me. You're the dead image of your father."

"Confess how it happened," I demanded.

"I will, seeing that the game is up with me now."

The man drew a long sigh before he commenced, in a faint voice:

"You know that I worked for your father up in the northern part of the State, when you were but a little boy.

"I remember your face well now," I interrupted.

"That's all right," continued the man. "You want to know about the fight. One day in winter we were out hunting in the woods. I fired at some squirrels, and some of the shot happened to strike your father.

"Then he became so mad that he rushed close up to me and discharged the contents of his gun right into my face. I turned my head at the moment and caught all the charge in my neck, except one shot that struck me on the forehead.

"I must have fired the other barrel into your father's breast at the same moment, as he reeled and fell. I fell at the same time, and I didn't know any more until I woke up with a stinging pain on the top of my head.

"Your father was lying near me, and he was stone dead.

"I dragged myself to a hunter's hut in the wood, and the man dressed my wound by patching it with the top of a kid's head, which he had just killed.

"The wound got well, but the horns, as you see, grew in time."

"Here is the surgeon," cried my artist friend. "Let the poor fellow have a chance. I believe he has told the truth."

When the surgeon examined the man's wound, he declared that his skull was fractured and that he would not survive long.

The unfortunate man breathed his last that night in my friend's room.

Some years after, my artist friend informed me that he had seen in one of our museums a human skull with horns resembling those of his old servant.

Charley Thurber was fully convinced that the skull belonged to his man with horns.

TELLING THE GOOD NEWS

Mrs. Youngma: And so my baby got the prize at the baby show? I knew he would. It couldn't have been otherwise.

Old Bachelor (one of the judges): Yes, madam, we all agreed that your baby was the least objectionable of the lot

PLUCK AND LUCK

CURRENT NEWS

MODERN WOMEN TOO MUCH ALIKE

Women of today lack individuality and originality, says Ethel Strudwick, newly appointed high mistress of St. Paul's Girls' School.

"They dress alike, wear the same hats and do their hair in the same way."

MOVING A RIVER

The Conemaugh River will be moved to make room for extension of the Pennsylvania Railroad yards at Conemaugh. Mountains behind made extension in that direction impossible, so the present river bed is being filled up and a new channel will be cut for the stream further south.

LIFE PROLONGED

After studying 2,500 ancient skulls and deciding their ages at time of death, T. Wingate Todd of Western Reserve University decided that man lives thirty years longer today than in antiquity. In ancient and primitive populations the "peak of death" occurred at forty-two years old. Today the peak of death occurs at seventy-two.

PRESENT EDUCATIONAL METHOD

People know many more facts today, but they seem no wiser for it, said Prof. A. J. Carson. "The present educational method is one of memory cramming," he observed. "The aim seems to be to cram the most facts into the student's head in the least time. Really, we only learn effectively by doing, and our young generation is seldom allowed to learn by doing."

MENTAL DISORDER CAUSES BOY TO WRITE BACKWARD

A six-year-old boy, who is otherwise normal, but can write only backward, is a patient in the Children's Hospital in London. He writes with his left hand and has no other abnormality except a tendency to stammer.

The boy is believed to be the victim of a rare and obscure disorder in which there is a transference of certain motor centers from the left to the right portion of the brain.

GERMS DO NOT SPARE STRONG

"It is the common belief," said F. D. Fromme, "that parasites are more apt to prey on weak individuals than on strong, vigorous ones, and although this is the general rule as applied to man and the domestic animals it is by no means true of plants.

"Such diseases of man as smallpox, whooping cough, typhoid fever and tatonus may attack the strong and vigorous as readily as the weak, and the blackleg disease of cattle is known to occur more commonly in robust cattle than in the weak ones."

SABOTS FOR CONDUCTORS

Sabots, the big French wooden shoes, have been adopted by many of the autobus conductors of Paris during the cold weather. When the thermometer hit freezing recently the bus men re-

verted to the methods of their youth. They knew that the thick woolen socks and the unrestrained movement of their feet would allow the blood to circulate, while the tight shoes of civilization limited the thickness of socks and impeded the flow of blood. The sabots, carved of wood, are also cheap and durable.

PAVING THE WAY FOR TELEPATHY

After trans-Atlantic telephone service and television will come telepathy, which will do away with "lip-wagging, breath-puffing antics" now essential to transmission of our thoughts, is the prediction of Prof. A. M. Low, British scientist.

"Wireless is developing human senses at such a rate that it is preparing the way for telepathy," Professor Low contends. "As it is, we are not content to receive an impression by man's senses alone. We don't judge our friends by what they say but by their looks, their touch, their smell and other senses of which we have no more knowledge than had ancient Egyptians of the X-ray or of milk bacteria."

MILLIONS SPENT FOR DEAD CHINESE

Coining money for ghosts is an industry which is giving employment to several thousand Chinese women in Chekiang and Kiangnan, according to information gathered by the Chinese Economic Bulletin.

The "money" is a special form of offering which is burnt at Chinese funerals by devout relatives in order that the deceased may enjoy all the comforts and luxuries of the world of the dead. It is made from a special tinfoil-coated paper, folded and pasted into the form of a silver syces "shoe"—a convenient piece of silver used as currency in many parts of China and valued according to weight.

The funeral "money" is hollow inside so that it will burn rapidly. Only through burning of this money are the ghosts of the departed supposed to be able to receive the affectionate contributions of their loving relatives. The shoes are from an inch and a half to three or four inches long, and hundreds or thousands are burnt at a single offering. Sometimes they are strung through the center with a cord, each string containing ten or twenty shoes, and sometimes they are packed into paper trunks and packages for burning.

In Shaohing some 700 shops are engaged in the manufacture of this funeral money, tin being supplied by more than thirty firms, and the large shops doing a business of about \$400,000 each year. According to estimates of the manufacturers' guild, the total production of tin-coated paper in Shaohing in 1925 amounted to \$7,000,000.

"The industry is one of the most important in the city," says the Bulletin, "and affords an interesting illustration of the effect of custom and religious belief on the economic life of the people."

TIMELY TOPICS

RUSSIA RANKS THIRD IN POPULATION

The census returns in Moscow to date show that Russia is the third most populous nation in the world, being led only by India and China. The population in 1927, it is announced, will approximate 145,000,000, an increase of 30 per cent. since the last census, taken in 1897.

BIBLE MARVELS SUPPORTED BY SCIENCE

Bible marvels are receiving growing support from science, says Sir Oliver Lodge, the noted physicist, and the progress of science is tending to strengthen theology in all its vital aspects.

"Certain Bible occurrences," he says, "have been doubted, such as the direct voice of the Baptism, the Pre-nence of the Transfiguration, Saul's vision on the road to Damascus. All these things science is beginning to show were true happenings. I look forward to the time when incarnation will be rationally recognized as both a Divine and human fact."

\$20,000,000 OF LIQUOR SENT TO U. S.

Twenty million dollars worth of alcoholic liquor was exported from Canada to the United States during 1926. The shipments of whisky month by month, as shown in official reports of the Canadian Department of Trade and Commerce, are: January, \$1,402,000; February, \$1,056,000; March, \$1,616,000; April, \$790,000; May, \$749,000; June, \$1,382,000; July, \$1,216,000; August, \$1,119,205; September, \$1,490,000; October, \$1,459,000; November, \$1,774,000; December, \$1,400,000.

To the foregoing must be added shipments of ale, beer and gin. More than \$5,000,000 worth of beer was sent to the United States.

SMALL HOMES BEING BUILT OF ADOBE

"Adobe," humble, sun-dried brick, was used by Franciscan Fathers in the building of their missions, and later many homes and commercial structures were erected with these rudely made bricks.

As the years wore on, however, adobe became primarily the stuff of which ruins were likely to be made. The sight-seeing tourist learned to look for the adobe mission and the adobe house as relics of a romantic past. He scarcely expected to see modern homes built of that material.

"Mission style" homes, churches and business blocks long have been popular, but ordinarily these have been built of brick or frame with a coating of stucco.

Lately, however, the old custom of using one's cellar excavation as a source of sun-dried bricks for walls has been revived, and modern small homes and ranch houses are being built of adobe.

EASTHAMPTON'S OLD HOUSES

The wave of old house restoration has reached Easthampton, L. I., which was settled in 1649. Houses of its early inhabitants may have thought their day was done when wealth and fashion moved into their neighborhood and built summer palaces overlooking the sea. Prosperity they

had had, and a society of their own, but they were a modest company of farmhouses and cottages. As the town grew and developed its business section, retirement was inevitable for many of its old dwellings. Those that other times did not scrap are retired nowadays to honor, instead of to obscurity and decay.

A humble dwelling, once in the heart of the town, has been transplanted to the outskirts of the village and looks as if it had stood there always. There is another that was moved more than a mile in order to preserve it, when its original site was claimed by a moving-picture theatre.

Easthampton people have been drawn as if to a museum by the recent changes wrought in old Rowdy Hall. Rowdy Hall is called one of the five oldest houses in the village. It is thought to have been built about 1740, though its name is much newer than that. In the '80's of the last century, when it stood down on Main street, it was tenanted by a group of young artists just returned from their studies abroad. Many of them are famous today, but they were boys then, full of high spirits and fun, and they christened it Rowdy Hall.

When, lately, its fate hung in the balance, one of Easthampton's wealthy matrons came to the rescue and moved it from the bustle of downtown to slumbering Egypt Green, on the lane to the sea. She protected it with a 150-year-old paling fence and laid an aged millstone at its door; then proceeded to transform its interior to accord with twentieth-century ideas.

Like many old Easthampton houses, it had a tiny box of a hall, with a steep stairway just inside the door, a fair-sized room on either side and a kitchen and pantry beyond, and two rooms and a half-attic upstairs. The facade was not altered, but at the rear a sun porch was added and servants' rooms. Upstairs the roof was dormered, in accordance with a precedent found in another old Long Island dwelling, to make space for bedroom and baths. From the old fire bucket placed at the door to receive umbrellas, to the witch's balls on the dining-room table, the place was then furnished with early American relics and reopened as a dwelling. Thus Rowdy Hall has come back—presenting, however, but one of the many manifestations of Easthampton's fervor for restoration.

Some of Easthampton's quaint old houses still hold to Main street, where they peep through leafy elms as they have done for several generations. First in the center of the village is Home, Sweet Home, a wisteria-entwined dwelling of Rowdy Hall's type, with an ancient windmill and well-sweep in its yard. This humble little home, according to tradition, was in John Howard Payne's mind when he wrote his immortal song. Long neglected and left to decay, the place in recent years has fallen into appreciative hands and has undergone thorough overhauling. Its present owners have filled it with the pewter, lustre ware and fine old furniture of other days, and have hung the walls of its paneled parlor with mementoes of Payne.—New York Times.

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